



FLORAL ART OF JAPAN

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FLORAL ART OF JAPAN

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FLORAL ART OF JAPAN

BY
ISSŌTEI NISHIKAWA



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EDITORIAL NOTE

It is a common desire among tourists to learn something of the culture of the countries they visit as well as to see their beautiful scenery. To see is naturally easier than to learn, but flying visits merely for sightseeing hardly furnish the time or opportunity for more than a casual glimpse of the culture of any foreign people. This is specially true of Japan.

The Board of Tourist Industry recognizes the difficulty of attaining this high purpose, viz., to provide foreign tourists with accurate information regarding the various phases of Japan's characteristic culture. It is endeavouring therefore to meet this obligation, as far as possible, by publishing this series of brochures.

The present series will, when completed, consist of more than a hundred volumes, each dealing with a different subject, but all co-ordinated. By reading therefore the entire series the foreign student of Japan may gain an adequate knowledge of the unique culture that has developed in this country through the ages.

For those who wish to follow up these studies with a closer investigation, bibliographies are appended, which we trust may be found reliable and authoritative guides in their study.

Board of Tourist Industry,
Japanese Government Railways

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I. FURYU AND FLOWER ARRANGEMENT

When I speak to my foreign friends of flower arrangement in Japan, what comes to my mind is the Japanese word *fūryū*. The Japanese call their tea ceremony and flower arrangement *fūryū no asobi*, or "elegant amusement," which is, to their mind, quite different from going to the theatre, or playing tennis or golf. Without knowing therefore the true meaning of *fūryū*, it is impossible to grasp the spirit which underlies Japanese flower arrangement.

In former days, the word *fūryū* might have been understood very differently from what we understand by it now. Most Japanese now think of it as being in opposition to Bushidō, or the Way of the Samurai. Bushidō values bravery more than anything else, and applauds him who fights at the risk of his life. But the way of *fūryū* is to shun all strife and to lose oneself in the joys of peace.

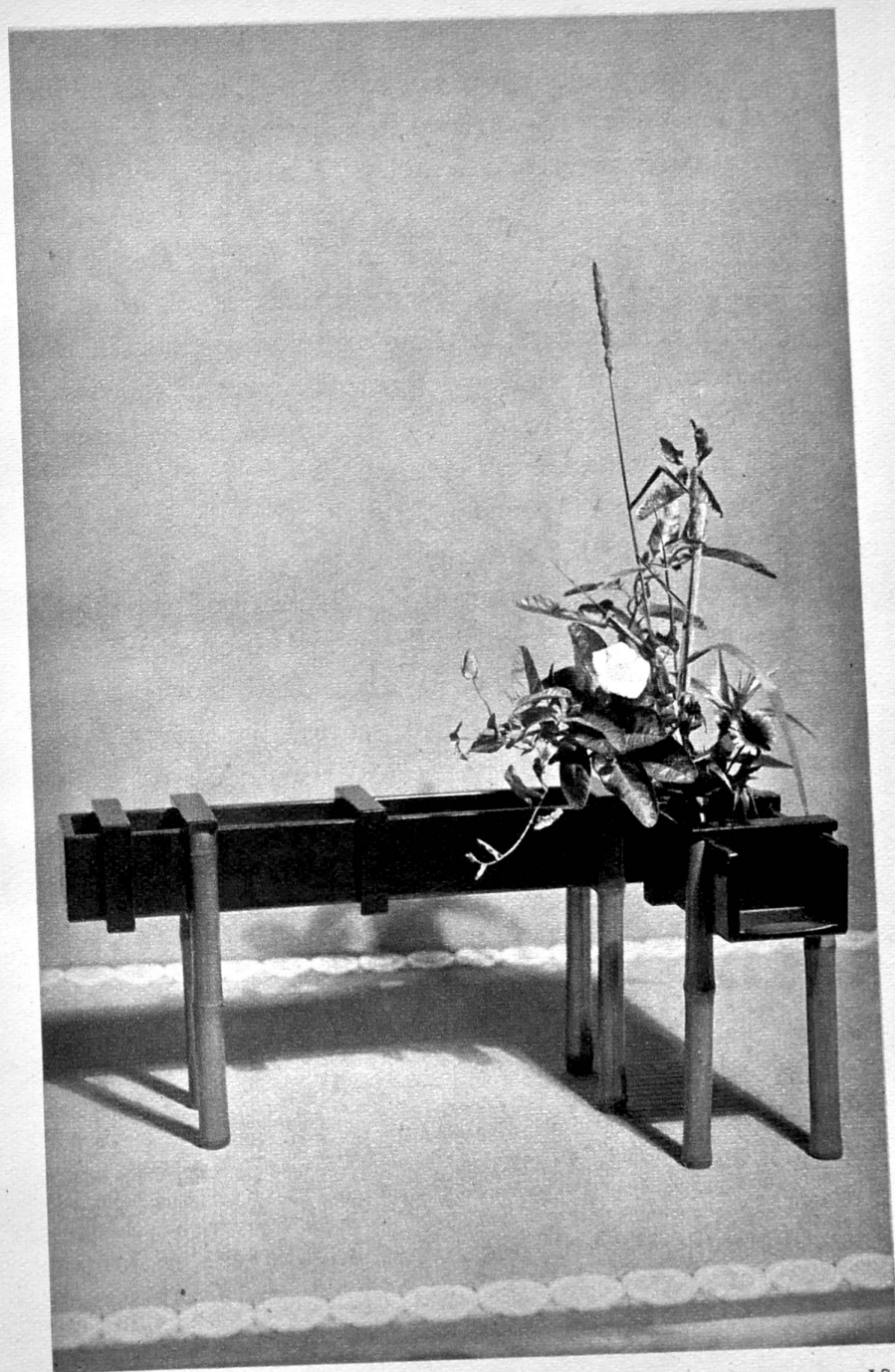
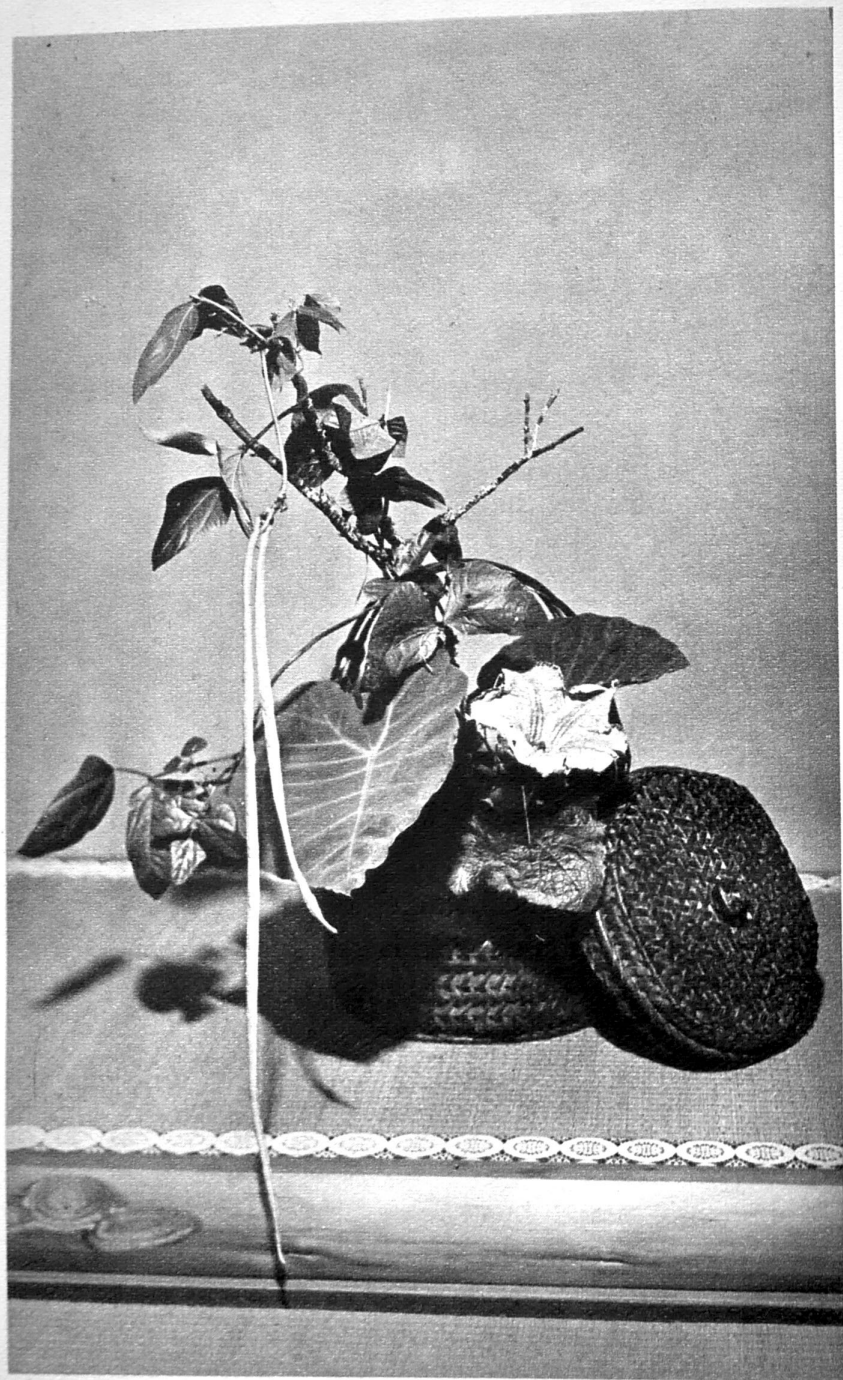
The Japanese are essentially an artistic people. Therefore they are very impressionable. If then their passions are aroused they will engage in whatever they undertake regardless of the gain or loss involved. On the other hand, in order to seek relief from life's tension, they may sometimes go to the other extreme of bequeathing their entire possessions to their relatives,



of abandoning all the rights and duties of a husband, and of enjoying that peace of mind which comes only from a life devoid of all worldly desires. To the Japanese such a life of renunciation is one realization of *fūryū* in life, and *cha-no-yu* (tea ceremony) and *ikebana* (flower arrangement) are but expressions of this phase of life.

How can the love of flower arrangement be understood as *fūryū*? Because it is the love of the peace of nature. Similarly, to lay out a garden around one's house may be taken as an act of *fūryū*, since its purpose is to provide the enjoyment of trees and stones, which symbolize the quietude of nature. When looking at some flower arrangement or a garden, Japanese often say that the style of the arrangement is quite in *fūryū*, or the design of the garden is out of *fūryū*. The term may also be applied to household goods, as one may often hear that such and such is not to be recommended, since it is not *fūryū*, although its shape or colour is very interesting.

What is then the meaning of *fūryū* in these cases, you may ask? If an article is said to be *fūryū*, it is, as a rule, of imperfect shape or of poor and meagre appearance. When a branch of a tree is twisted or dwarfed instead of allowed to grow straight and luxuriant, or has but few scattered flowers instead of bearing many fully blown flowers; or when a tree has become moss-covered, old and dying, such a branch or tree is said to be *fūryū*. And if the term is used in describing household goods, you may be sure that they are of a delicate nature, often crooked, and usually antiquated and frail.



You may wonder what such things have to do with *fūryū*. How could they be connected with the love of peace? The answer is to be found in the fact that their frailty impresses one, not with a feeling of dominating power, but with one of tenderness; anything perfect or nearly perfect excites in one the desire for possession, and then, too, behind it there is felt to exist a powerful personality; a thing apparently poor in appearance and distorted or deformed, however, does not rouse any such desire or feeling in anyone. Wherever there is no covetous eye being cast, there is peace, and the beauty born of peace. And this beauty is that of *fūryū*, the beauty of *ikebana*.

Therefore, *fūryū* is servile in disposition, one might say, and negative in its attitude towards life, which fact seems hardly compatible with that of the ever active and strife-loving Bushidō. But, curiously enough, this *fūryū* has existed side by side with Bushidō in the life of the Japanese people, and it has even been nourished by Bushidō itself, since it has served as a safety-valve in tempering the nature of the Japanese.

The growth of the influence of *fūryū* upon Japanese life can be clearly traced in the history of the nation. It was about the 15th century that the Japanese as a people began to understand and appreciate this peaceful way of living. For a long time there had been continuous civil wars in Japan, and the people had come to realize most acutely the evils of strife. The first man who upheld and encouraged *fūryū* was no other than Ashikaga Shōgun, the chief of warriors and administrator of the country at that time. He was succeeded

by two great heroes in the age of the civil wars, Oda Nobunaga and Toyotomi Hideyoshi. These two great men, also appreciating the life of *fūryū*, gave preference to such men as Sen-no-Rikyū, the master of tea ceremony, and enjoyed to the full the pleasures of *chanoyu* and flower arrangement.

At the back of the gay, flower-like Bushidō, whose virtues are persistency, fidelity, endurance, bravery and activity, the poor, retiring *fūryū* with its tender heart and negative attitude towards life has been highly valued by the people. Even in the days of continual warfare, those who did not understand this art of life were despised as being uncultured and vulgar men. But, on the contrary, one who knew and mastered it was highly esteemed, however low his social rank might be. A warrior, who should be concerned with bravery more than anything else, might find infinite joy and peace in the meanest flower set in a humble vase. The union of these two—Bushidō and *fūryū*—may seem to some people to be one of the greatest inconsistencies in the life of any nation. Yet, as far as the actual life of the people is concerned, there has really been no inconsistency or contradiction between these two ways of living. This seems to be one of the most interesting characteristics of the Japanese people.

The illustrations

Tokonoma with Flower Arrangement. (Facing page 10)

Flowers are arranged in a vase hanging on the pillar. Note the artistic effect of the flowers produced by arrangement in harmony with the pictures in the scroll. The drawing on the scroll is by the famous artist Maruyama Ōkyo. The flowers in the vase are the seven grass flowers of autumn—a favourite theme of the poets of old Japan.

Flowers arranged in a basket. (Facing page 12)

Vase—Basket with lid

Flowers—*Jūroku-sasage* (*vigna sinensis*),

Japanese potato leaves,

Japanese pumpkin

Flowers arranged in a *Kakehi* vase. (Facing page 13)

Vase—*Kakehi* (spout) vase, designed by the author

Flowers—Wild morning glory

II. THREE FUNDAMENTAL FORMS OF FLOWER ARRANGEMENT— SHIN, GYO, SO

Our common sense tells us that a tree or plant which has grown tall and straight, with its branches or leaves spreading in four directions in an orderly and luxuriant manner, may be said to have a good and beautiful form. In flower arrangement, however, a tree is purposely twisted, with a branch or two taken away from it, and some leaves torn off; and though it has lost its seeming balance in form and is apparently ugly in shape, it is considered to be interesting and even beautiful.

A certain book on floral art says that what appears to be symmetry to the ordinary eye is of a lower kind, but that the symmetry which may be found in apparent irregularity is of a higher kind. The Japanese seek to express this latter kind of symmetry not only in their flower arrangement, but in nearly everything in life. Take for instance the articles used in the dinner service. In Western countries, uniformly made dishes or plates are used, as uniformity is the first requisite of beauty according to Occidental ideas. On the Japanese table, however, will be found no such uniformity but much variety or irregularity: there are dishes of different colouring or plates of dissimilar shapes

and of various sorts. Yet at such a confusing sight the esthetic sense of the Japanese is not offended but finds gratification.

In a Japanese house there is a *tokonoma* or alcove in the room where guests are entertained. This alcove is regarded as the most important part of the room. Yet it is not placed in the front part of the room, facing the garden, but it occupies a corner, its two pillars facing each other, one of which is angular, the other round. How has this love of irregularity come about in the mind of the Japanese? It is, I think, born of their love of nature and of their intimacy with it.

As Japan is a small island country situated in the Far East, having very little level ground but abounding in mountains and rivers, she has been endowed by nature with a great variety of natural scenery: her rivers and streams are entrancingly meandering; her mountains are omnipresent; her trees and plants, due to their insecure growth in glens or steep places, are strangely twisted. To Westerners, who have been accustomed to see trees and plants grow straight, these twisted or dwarfed natural objects of Japan may appear unnatural and consequently ugly, but to the Japanese people who have been brought up to love variety or irregularity in everything, they are quite interesting and indeed beautiful. And so it often happens that a tree of natural growth is thought by the people of Japan to be quite commonplace and uninteresting.

So nature is rich in variety in Japan, and this has profoundly influenced the life and the esthetic consciousness of the people so that the idea has come to be

formed in their minds that what makes things interesting is irregularity, and variety has come to be regarded as an indispensable feature of beauty. This, however, does not mean that Japanese flower arrangement recognizes no beauty of symmetry or of regularity, or that only things that are twisted, crooked, or irregularly shaped interest the Japanese people. They know and appreciate, of course, the beauty which comes from symmetry or regularity, and in their flower arrangement, such symmetry or regularity is called *shin* (elaborate), which is regarded as the correct form of beauty in this art. The contrary of this form of beauty, or irregularity, is called *sō* (abbreviated). The form which comes between *shin* and *sō* is named *gyō* (intermediary). These three constitute the fundamental forms of the art of flower arrangement in Japan.

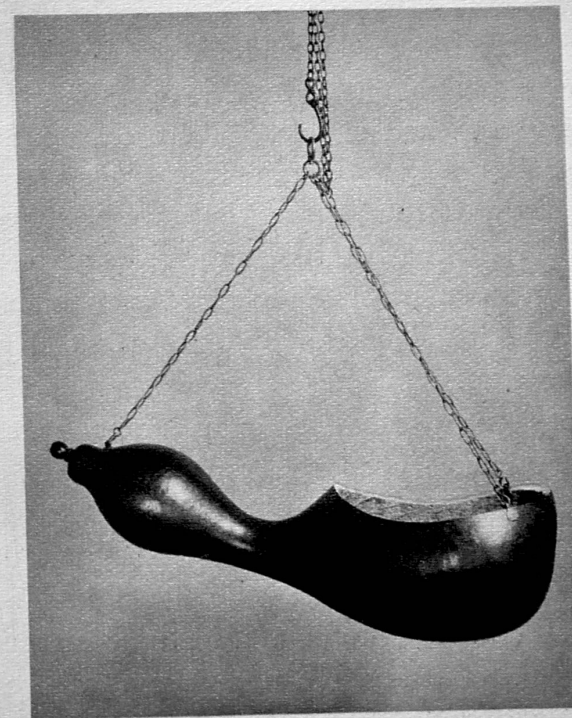
Sō signifies "simple," and is at the bottom of the scale of beauty. But today *sō* and *gyō* are considered to be more important than *shin*, and in fact, very few people now pay much attention to this correct form of arrangement, or *shin* in *ikebana*. Lately, people have come even to discard such distinctions as they feel no necessity to make them. It was in the early days of the historical development of the art that these distinctions were made, and that the *shin* form was very highly thought of. This was roughly from 1400 to 1600, or during the periods of Higashiyama, of Momoyama, and the early days of the Tokugawa Shogunate.

The reason why these distinctions have come to be discarded is because the patronage of the art has shifted from the aristocracy to the people. There may

be some women of the upper classes today who are still eager to learn the art of flower arrangement because they find some interest in it; they do not study it, I am sure, because they feel any need of the knowledge of the art in their daily life as was so in former days. In the early days of flower arrangement some knowledge of the art was indispensable to aristocrats, since flowers were always used in their ceremonies and banquets. And according to the degree of solemnity of the ceremony or the quality of the entertainment at the table, either the *shin* form, the *gyō* form or the *sō* form was approved and selected. But with the coming of the Meiji Restoration (1868), the social distinctions which had hitherto existed were abolished, and the aristocrats or nobles had to abandon their patrician ways of living. Thus, the differentiations in the form of flower arrangement which had depended on social distinctions became unnecessary and useless.

There is in Japan at the head of the nobles the Imperial Family, and the art of flower arrangement has had some place in the culture of the members of the Imperial Household. The art, however, belonged primarily to the warrior class. Because of this, and also because of court custom, the ceremonies at court have made very little use of the art, although there were some rulers, such as Emperor Gomizunowo, who showed a deep interest in it. Today, there are still many nobles or aristocrats in Japan, but their mode of life does not greatly differ from that of the common people as far as matters of food, shelter and clothing are concerned. The only difference is that among

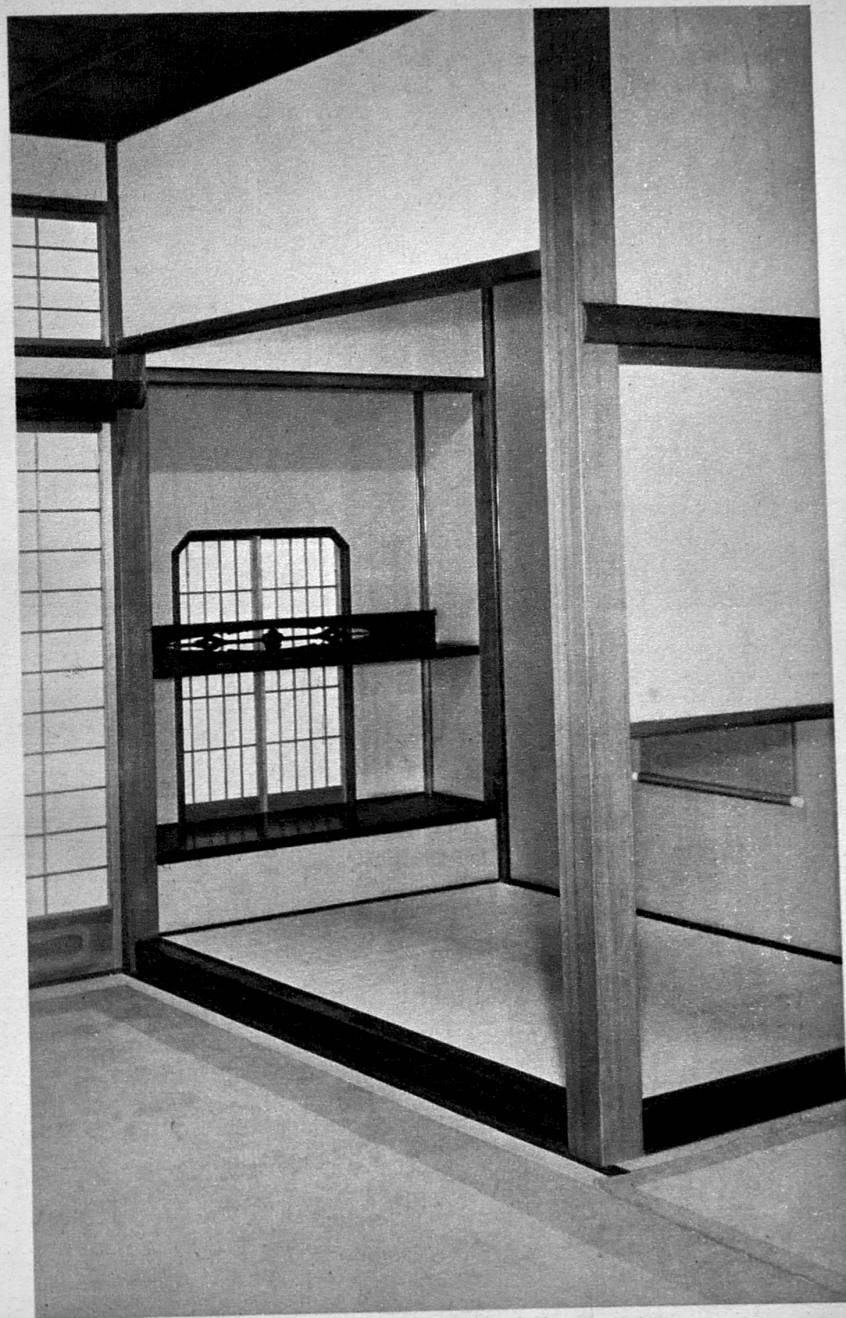
the nobility and aristocracy there is an abundance of luxury. Thus, one might say that with the coming of the new era the culture peculiar to the aristocratic class came to an end, which virtually did away with the three fundamental forms of flower arrangement.



Gourd Vase

III. TOKONOMA—A LITTLE GALLERY OF FLOWER ARRANGEMENT

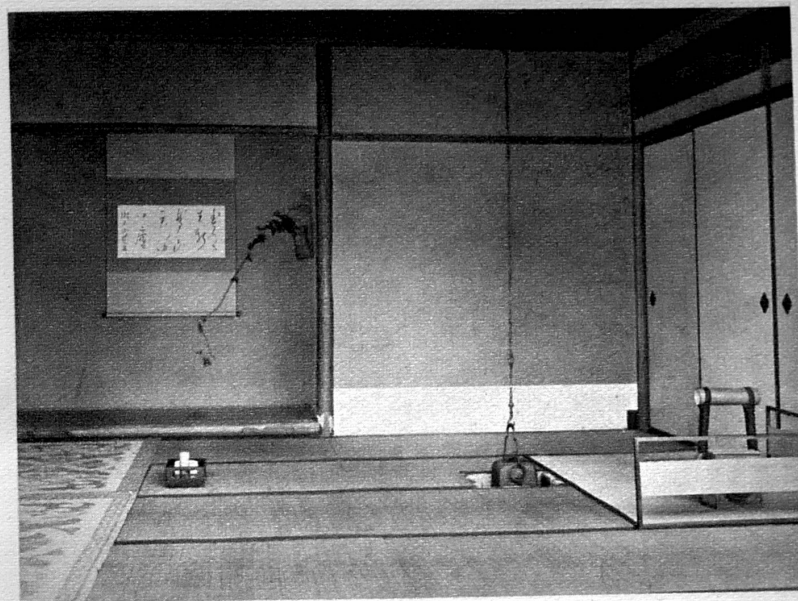
There is neither table nor chair in a strictly Japanese-style house. As Japanese sit upon the floor, which is composed of thick mats made of tightly pressed rice straw covered with fine rush matting, they find their rooms very tidy and simple. There is, moreover, no bright-coloured paper covering the walls, which are made of earth. Hence, those who have been accustomed to the bright-coloured Western rooms may feel as if they were in an unfurnished room rather than being able to appreciate its simplicity and neatness. Moreover, unlike Westerners, Japanese do not, as a rule, decorate their rooms with sculptures in a corner, vases upon shelves, or pictures upon the walls: their rooms may appear very much as if they had been deserted for a long time by their master. Why do they not decorate their rooms like Westerners, you will ask? The reply is, because there is always a *tokonoma*, or alcove, in the best room of every Japanese house, where a picture scroll and some flowers in a vase are displayed. If the walls were covered with bright-coloured paper, these flowers and the picture would attract no attention from the eye. The *tokonoma* is no other than the point of focus of the room, at which the attention of all eyes in the room is to be directed. To do





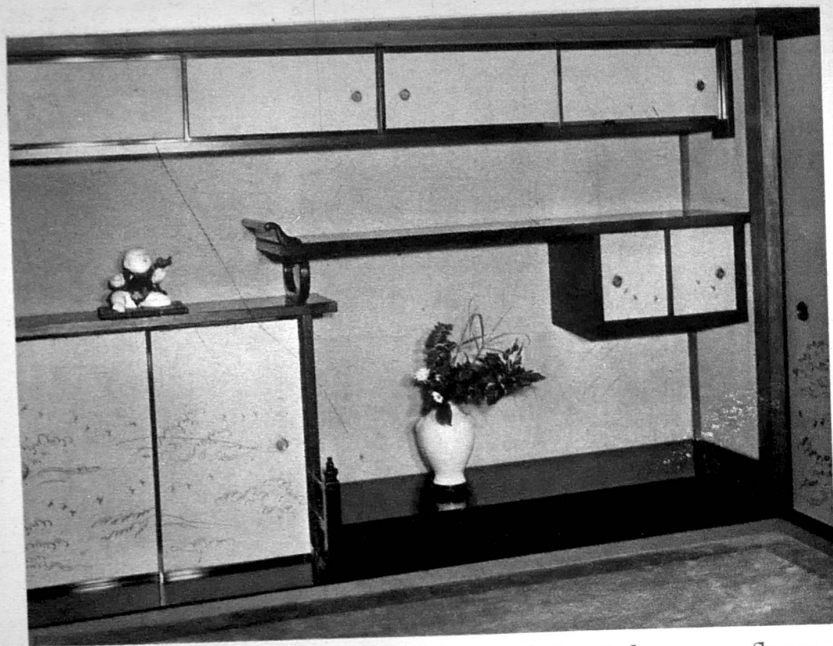
away with wall paper, to dispense with all other decorations in the room, or, in other words, to eliminate all distracting colours and designs from the room, is to give spirit and animation to the quiet, simple and yet refined Japanese flower arrangement in the *tokonoma*.

The form of *tokonoma* resembles that of the fireplace in the Western home. You can get an almost correct idea of it if you will imagine your fireplace being considerably enlarged with a high framework so as to have nothing but open space within. The *tokonoma* usually measures six *shaku* in width (one *shaku* being approximately one foot), and is at least three *shaku* in depth, although sometimes you may find it about double this size when the room is unusually large. Three sides of the *tokonoma* are walls.



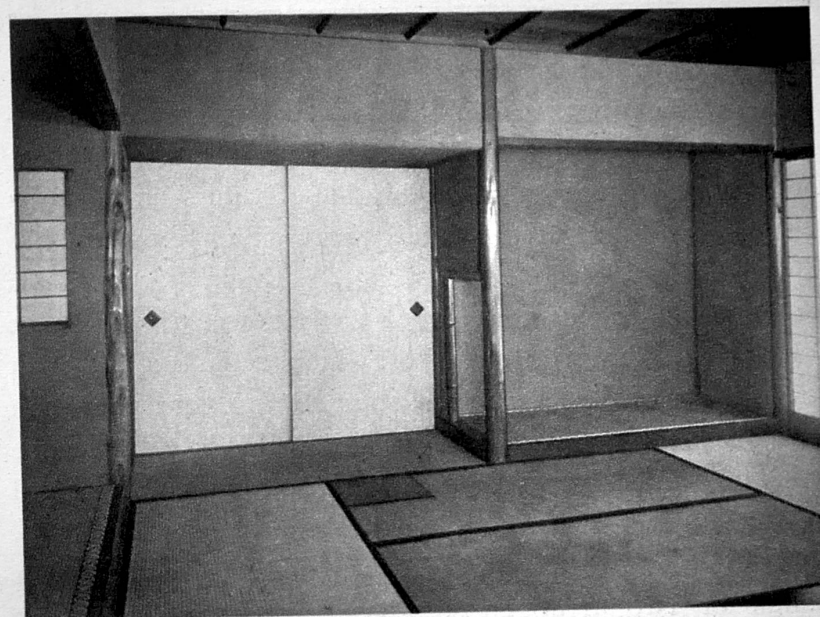
A picture scroll hangs on the rear wall, before which some flowers are set in a vase.

In Western architecture the fireplace forms the centre of interest in the room and serves, at the same time, as an important decoration. What the fireplace is to the Western room the *tokonoma* is to the Japanese room, as it is the centre of interest and the only decorated part to speak of. Just as people in the West invite their friends to the fireside for comfort and the pleasure of conversation, the people in this island Empire have their guests sit before the *tokonoma*, and entertain them with the pictures and flowers which are arranged in it. If one should compare the fireplace with the *tokonoma* in its function and meaning in the home life of each, he might conclude how impractical the people of Japan are, and how they put taste above



all other things in life. Because of the *tokonoma*, flower arrangement has become not only a great amusement of the people, but it has also become an indispensable part of their home life. This is the reason why flower arrangement has neither become antiquated nor fallen into disuse in Japan.

Since the Japanese as a rule build small houses and provide them with a *tokonoma* for the display of pictures and flower arrangement, which is not for the sake of the health or comfort of the family, but for their esthetic enjoyment, they may be thought to be a very impractical people, mixing the practical with the poetic or artistic, and making no clear distinction between life and art. But the original purpose of the *tokonoma* was, historically speaking, not for the exhibition of pictures or for flower arrangement, but for re-



ligious exercises. The *tokonoma* was, in fact, the family altar. Here was placed an image of Buddha, together with an offering of flowers and burning incense, before which in the mornings and evenings the whole family gathered together to worship. This religious use and meaning of the *tokonoma* gradually disappeared, however, and later the place came to have only esthetic significance. But even long after its original meaning was lost, it was somehow felt to be sacred, and it continued to be adorned with chaste flowers and edifying pictures.

The Japanese who first invented the *tokonoma* meant to dedicate it to the memory of Buddha; and to make the place appropriate for his abode, they set flowers before it and laid out the surrounding garden in such a way that it could be seen from the *tokonoma*.

In their minds, therefore, these creations were not primarily intended to be simple imitations of nature for the gratification of the esthetic sense, but for the realization of their religious ideals. Or at least they were efforts at bringing this earthly life of theirs as close as possible to that of the other world which existed only in their imagination. This fact, I think, accounts for the peculiar character of their early flower arrangement and gardening, the forms of which seem today, even to the Japanese themselves, so unnatural that they can hardly be thought to be beautiful. This is not because the men in those days were unable to appreciate natural beauty, but because they tried to improve upon nature.

By the side of the *tokonoma* there is sometimes a shelf or two arranged step-wise, upon which, besides flowers, chinaware or some other *objets d'arts* such as raised lacquer objects may be set. Thus, this shelf may be likened to a little cabinet for the display of art wares.

The illustrations

Tokonoma in the Feudal Age. (Facing page 23)

This *tokonoma* is modelled after that of a temple in the feudal age. It is 9 *shaku* in width and 6 *shaku* in depth. Near the window is a little shelf, which is partly for purposes of displaying *objets d'art* and partly for decoration of the room. This *tokonoma* possesses more dignity than one in an ordinary dwelling house. The pillar is of angular shape; the walls are papered like Western walls. Wall-paper with bird or flower designs is rarely found, and as the designs often mar the effect of the pictures on hanging scrolls, plain or white wall-paper is commonly used.

Tokonoma with a Study. (Facing page 24)

The best room in a fashionable house, of 15 mats size, with a *tokonoma* and a study. The study, or *shoin* in Japanese, was really a desk in olden days to be used for writing and reading. A writing-box and books were usually put upon it; over it is a bell hung from the ceiling for calling a servant. This study or desk has now become a part of the decoration of the room and serves for displaying *objets d'art*. The *tokonoma* has three walls as it is intended to display a picture scroll, while the *shoin* or study has a window for light.

Tokonoma in a Tea House. (Facing page 25)

Plain and simple *tokonoma*, with a round natural pine tree for the pillar. The lower part of the wall is papered in order to prevent the earth from falling when the *tokonoma* is cleaned with a broom. The paper used is often of a light black colour or it may be letter-paper which has been used and is covered with Japanese writing. This *tokonoma* is 6 *shaku* in width and 3 *shaku* in depth, with a picture scroll on the rear wall and flowers in a vase hanging on the right side wall.

Step-like Shelf. (Facing page 26)

The adjoining room to the one shown in No. 7, showing a step-like shelf, with flowers arranged in a vase, and a wooden sculptured piece on it. On this shelf such articles as stones, *bonsai*, raised lacquered boxes, china, art-picture books, or scrolls may be placed. The shelf is made of mulberry wood, the dark brown colour of which provides a pleasant contrast with the light blue colour of *tatami*, Japanese matting, on the floor.

Room with Two *Tokonomas*. (Facing page 27)

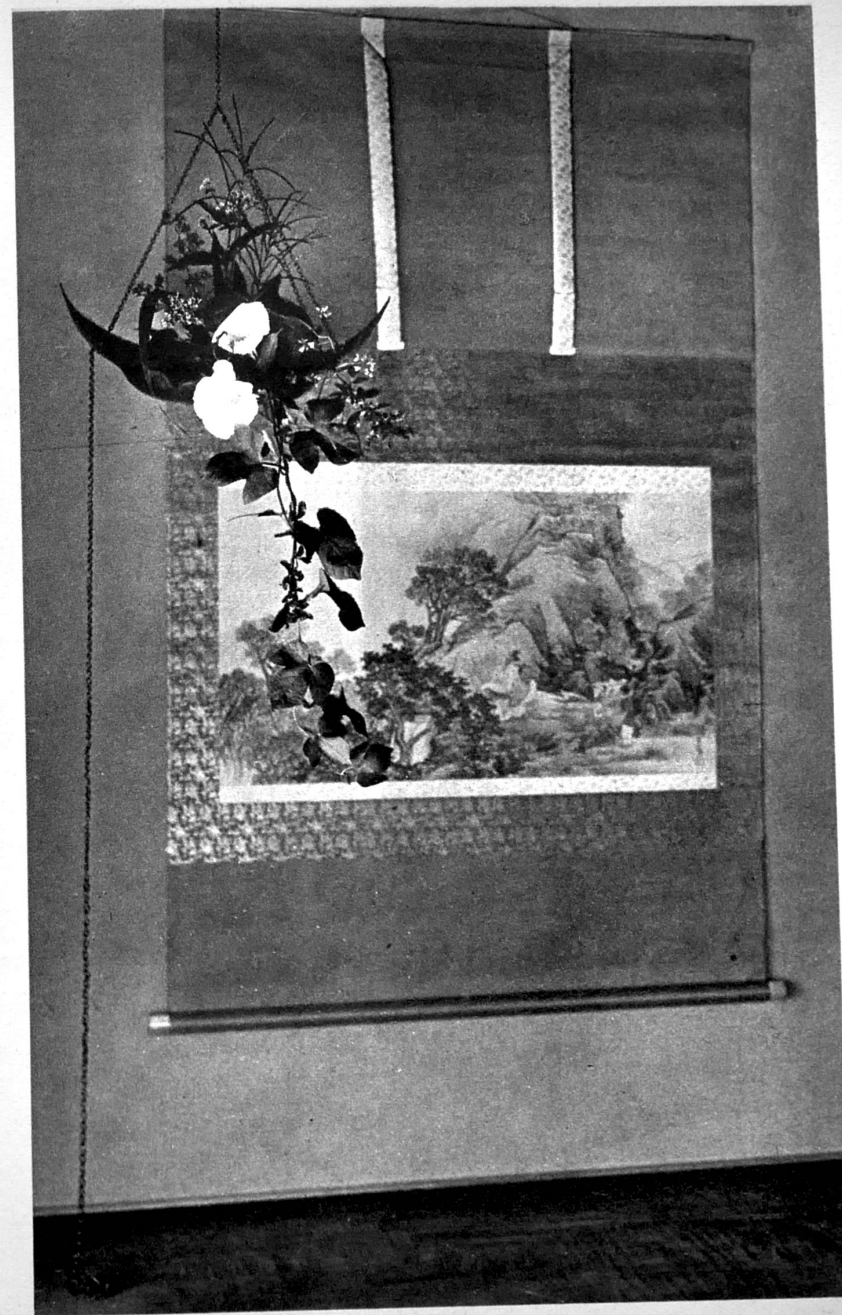
Room of 9 mats size, with 2 *tokonomas* side by side. This room is in the author's house. One *tokonoma* is for picture scrolls, the other for flower arrangement. The *tokonoma* for flower arrangement is 12 *shaku* in width and 3 *shaku* in depth; the *tokonoma* for picture scrolls is 6 *shaku* in width and 3 *shaku* in depth. The pillar is a round cedar tree; the frame of the side window is made of bamboo; the low ceiling appearing in the picture is called "earthen ceiling," or a ceiling covered with earth very much like the walls in a room.

IV. HOW TO SEE JAPANESE FLOWER ARRANGEMENT

In Japanese flower arrangement there may sometimes be found, besides flowers of various kinds, bare branches of trees, or branches bearing fruit but having no flowers, and again withered trees or even weeds. Foreigners not accustomed to Japanese flower arrangement may wonder why the Japanese make use of such things as decoration, and the foreigner often fails to see their beauty.

The reason for the use of things other than flowers is that the Japanese put more emphasis upon the forms of nature and life than upon their colour. In other words, Japanese flower arrangement is intended to represent some phase of natural life. Like the drama which makes use of living men upon the stage to represent various phases of man's life in this world, Japanese flower arrangement purports to represent various phases of nature by utilizing flowers and other natural objects. In flower arrangement the actors and actresses are the flowers and trees, and the stage is the flower vase.

Since olden days, when looking even at flowers, Japanese have found more beauty in their figures or forms than in their colours. This may be due to the fact that in Japan there have been no flowers so bright



and colourful as those which grow in the torrid zone ; but even imported flowers, such as roses and lilies, the Japanese prefer to see in their natural growth, that is, among leaves and long stems, rather than cut short and with very few leaves, as they are often found in the flower markets of the West.

In this respect, the Chinese, though they are very near neighbours and are likewise Orientals, differ very much from the Japanese in their taste for flowers. The Chinese, as a rule, love tree peonies, herbaceous peonies, roses, and orchids—all strongly perfumed and clearly outlined flowers. Their taste is much the same as that of Western peoples, while the Japanese are fond of such flowers as the cherry (which, because it is clearly outlined, is not unattractive even to the Western eye), the bell-flower, the miscanthus, rough-leafed patrinia, bush clover, and pampas grass, some of which are hardly to be called flowers, and others which are only weeds. But even these have been the subject of beautiful poetry and art in Japan.

“To count the flowers blooming in the autumnal field,

There are as many as seven of them.”

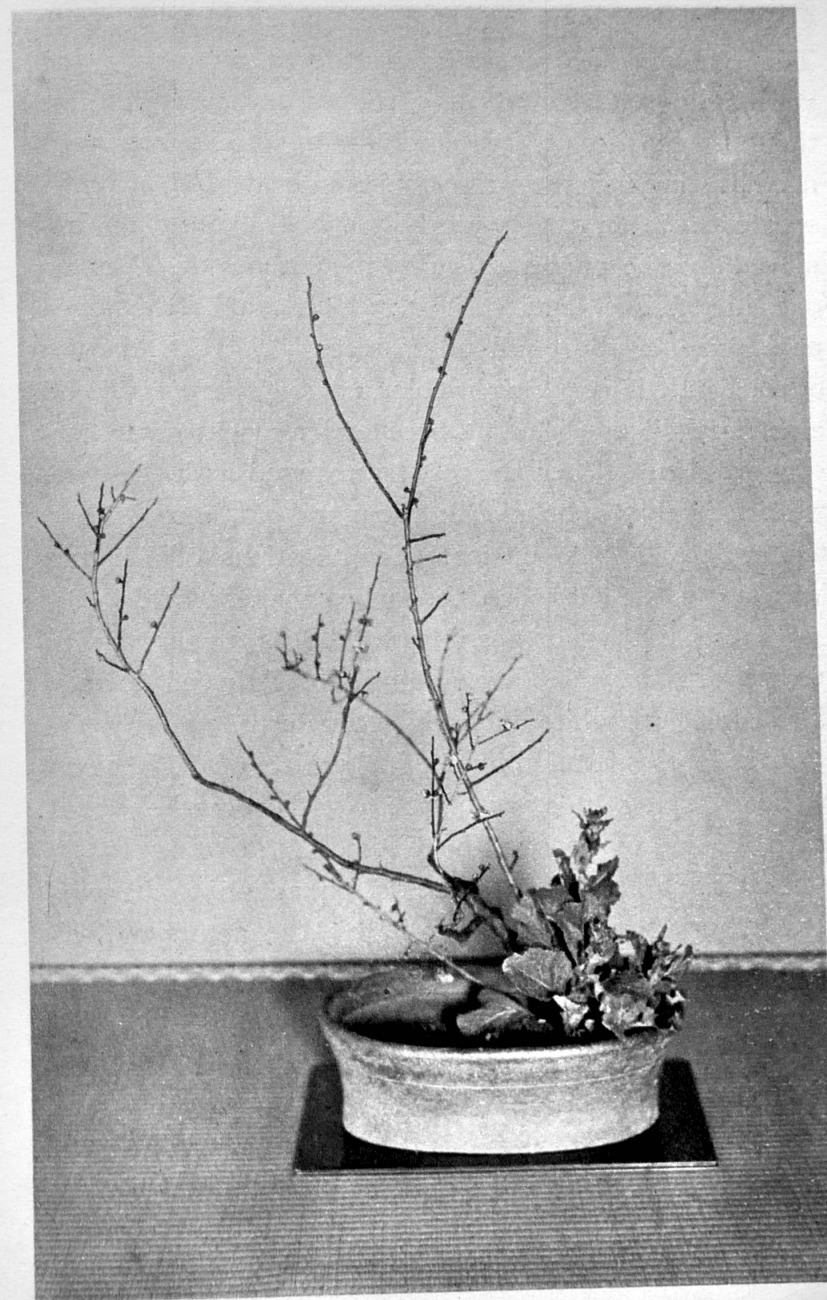
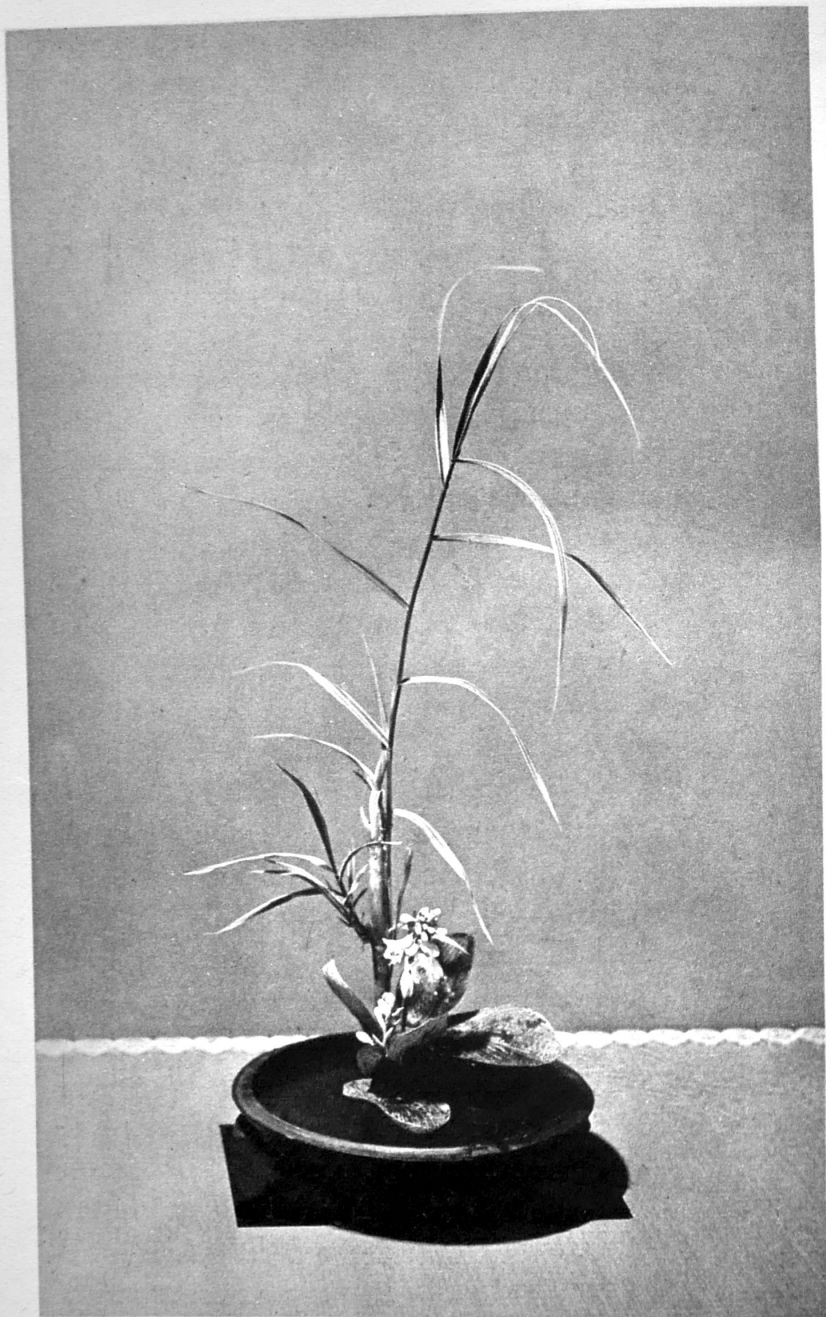
So sings the famous *tanka*, which was composed during the Nara Period (the 6th and 7th centuries), of the seven flowers of autumn, one of which is *ominaeshi*, or patrinia. This flower, as it has a disagreeable odour, has been called “petrified vinegar” by the Chinese, but it has been sung by many of the Japanese poets who, having been charmed by the beauty of its form, have called it *ominaeshi*, or the “maiden flower,” and

counted it among the most beautiful flowers of autumn.

It is, then, but natural that the Japanese who, having been attracted by the forms of nature rather than by its colours, have so far endeavoured to represent the beauty of form in nature through their flower arrangement.

The drama and the novel, which represent certain aspects of human life, are the common property of mankind, and can be found in every civilized country, but the art of flower arrangement and of gardening, which aim at the representation of life in nature as it centres around human life, by means of trees and plants, are peculiar to Japan. The birth of this peculiar art in this country is attributable to the special regard which the people have for nature. The Japanese treat nature as respectfully as they treat their fellow men, and are moved by the beauty of nature just as they are moved by the beautiful deeds of men. This intimate relationship with nature may be accounted for by the fact that nature in this island country is so gentle and beautiful. Nature seems to the Japanese to enwrap all living creatures with her love and beauty ; she has a healing and comforting effect upon the heart which turns to her with sincerity and love. From such union of man with nature, I think, was born the art of flower arrangement and the art of gardening in Japan.

As in the drama or novel a foil is necessary to set the leading character in high relief, so in Japanese flower arrangement a foil is employed in order to emphasize the characteristic form of nature. This is represented by the method of grouping or combination.



One of these groupings is that of a pine tree with roses. The pine tree is generally considered as manly and very strong, its trunk being robust and powerful like the muscular arms of a labouring man, and its evergreen needles thriving through summer's heat and winter's severe cold. It stands sturdy and bold like a giant unmoved by the affairs of puny men about it. Yet no one fails to see dignity in it, which makes the Japanese prize it above all other trees. A rose, on the other hand, is very bright-coloured, but very frail and ephemeral, like a beautiful but slender, a witty yet nervous woman. When the rose is arranged with the pine, we are likely to behold in them an old hero with a tender lady in the intricate complications of life and love, as in the play of Othello by Shakespeare.

Here are two or possibly three lilies arranged with a rose vine on which are a number of little red flowers. The cool, pure white lilies which are surrounded by the little red roses remind one of a prince of high blood as he is trying to learn of the world from the words of the maids of honour about him.

Unlike the drama, there is no action to be performed, no word to be spoken, by the actors or actresses of flower arrangement—the plants or trees set in a vase. They all sit or stand quietly in the vase. They are to keep their poses unchanged forever, just as in pictures. But even so, if one has eyes to see, one can discern their expressions as manifested in their delicate figures. Some of them are aglow with joy and gladness, while others are buried in dark sorrow. Again, some are feeling lonely, while others are gay

with love and life. And if one fails to see these various expressions, Japanese flower arrangement will remain forever a sealed art to him.

The illustrations

Flowers arranged in the *tokonoma*. (Facing page 31)

Vase—Boat-shaped hanging vase

Asagao (morning glory),

Hagi (lespedeza),

Ojiwa (weeds)

Flowers arranged in a flower dish. (Facing page 34)

Vase—flower dish

Flowers—Reeds and *giboshu* (plantain-lilies)

Flowers arranged in a Nanban dish. (Facing page 35)

Vase—Nanban (Spanish) dish

Flowers—Plum and the rape

V. THE HISTORY OF JAPANESE FLOWER ARRANGEMENT—HISTORICAL CENTRES OF THE ART

The Ginkakuji Temple and the Ashikaga Shogunate

Those who have visited Japan are most likely to have seen a temple called Ginkakuji and its beautiful garden in Kyoto. As the temple is one of the most famous sights in that ancient capital, the guide will not fail to take you there, if you visit the city. It is built at the foot of a mountain on the outskirts of the town. Passing by a dozen or so of the straw-thatched farm-houses standing as of old on either side of the road leading to the gate, you will enter the temple yard where you will behold some old pine trees with their green needles, growing out of the clean white sand, upon which traces of the sweeper's broom are clearly seen. You will be impressed by the neatness of the ground and the artistic quality of the building, and may say to yourself, "This is certainly a silver pavilion!"

This Ginkakuji Temple, or "Silver Pavilion" as it has been called by foreign visitors, is the birthplace of Japanese flower arrangement. *Cha-no-yu*, the tea ceremony, also originated here. When the mountain was the seat of the Ashikaga Shōgun's villa long, long ago, a small house of four and a half mats in size was

dedicated to the memory of Buddha for the purpose of family worship, and this became, we are told, the first tea house in Japan. The temple itself was built by the eighth Ashikaga Shōgun, or Ashikaga Yoshimasa, who was a representative of the aristocracy of that time, as he was the head of the samurais as well as chief government administrator. But being tired of mundane affairs, and having abdicated his seat in the government to his son Yoshihisa, he retired to this place and built a villa which included a beautiful garden and a three-storied temple, the ceiling of which he ordered to be plated with silver. Hence it came to be known as the Ginkakuji, or the "Silver Pavilion." The villa served the purpose of viewing the mountains afar, the gardens around, or the flower arrangement within; gatherings for the tea ceremony and incense-burning were also held there. The incense-burning was called *kōdō* in Japanese, *kō* meaning incense and *dō* way, the object of which was to burn incense and to enjoy its fragrance. The men who gathered here enjoyed themselves in these games—they are, indeed, hardly to be called games, so quiet is their nature,—for they loved so quiet a life. This was about the year 1478, or four and a half centuries ago.

A born Shōgun, a high aristocrat, and the most powerful of all rulers, such as Yoshimasa, might have given himself up to pomp and luxury, and have spent a life of debauchery. Such was, however, by no means the case. Forsaking all the affairs of the world, he retired to the lonely foot of the mountain, and contented himself with viewing such inanimate objects as trees, stones,



The birth-place of floral art—the Ginkakuji Temple at Kyoto

and flowers in the garden, or the mountains afar. One may wonder what led him to spend such a life as this.

As my home is not far from the Ginkakuji, I have often visited the temple. And when I look at the garden strewn with neatly-swept white sand, the three-storied pavilion as it is reflected in the water, or the blue mountains towering above, my imagination goes back four hundred years ago, recalling the life of this Shōgun. On reading the history of Japan one will discover that this was the most troublesome of all periods in this country. Even by reading one can feel its poignancy and distress. How much more troublesome and unpleasant, then, this period must have been for one who was born to be its ruler, to witness the petty feuds and bloody strife which took place almost

every day among the lesser nobles or samurais. How relieved he must have felt when he retired to this villa and quietly sipped his tea in a room (about 9 ft. square), while looking at the mountains in the distance, the trees and stones in the garden, or the simple flower arrangement in the *tokonoma*!

The Japanese see an exemplification of *fūryū*, or elegant life, in Yoshimasa: they have called him the *fūryū* Shōgun and great master of tea ceremony. As may be easily seen, it was the troubles and sorrows of life in this world which gave rise to the life of *fūryū*: to forget these troubles and anxieties, to heal the wounds of life, was to lead a life of *fūryū*, to apply oneself to tea ceremony, flower arrangement, or to lay out a garden like that of the Ginkakuji Temple. Therefore, it may be said that *fūryū* can hardly be appreciated by any except those who, like Yoshimasa, having a keen sensibility, have drunk much from the bitter cup of life.

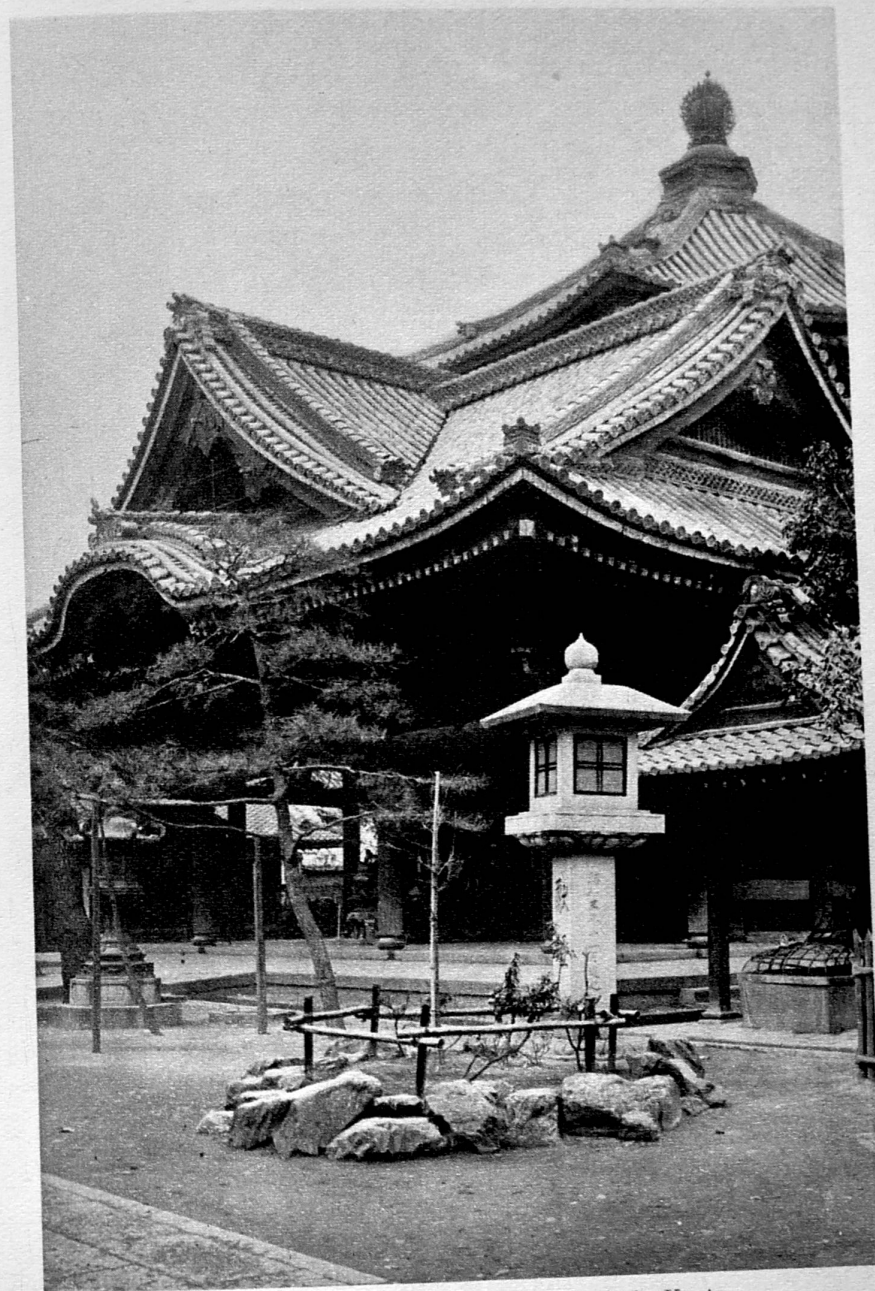
Yoshimasa's statue is installed in the Hall of the Ginkakuji Temple. The figure represented there is a monk with shaven head and wearing priestly robes. When he lived at the Ginkakuji, he seems to have had a few attendants (*chabōzu*, "tea-priests") who looked after the tea ceremony and flower arrangement for him. From the names of these attendants, which were such priestly names as Sō-ami, or Gei-ami, and also from the priestly robes which they wore, we may rightly infer that life at the villa was very much like that of a regular priest in a Buddhist temple. And from this it follows that to see flowers in a vase, to drink tea, or

to breathe the perfume of incense, was to do a priestly service at a Buddhist temple. So we may not err in thinking that these men at the Ginkakuji Temple must have learned the art of flower arrangement, or the tea ceremony, in the same way as a priest attained his enlightenment at a temple, dedicating his heart and soul to the one and eternal Buddha above, and forsaking all the affairs of the world below.

Among these attendants of Yoshimasa's the one who was best versed in the art of flower arrangement seems to have been Sō-ami. His father was called Gei-ami, and his grandfather, Nō-ami. These three were able teachers of Yoshimasa as they all had skill in drawing pictures as well as a knowledge of the tea ceremony, besides a mastery of the art of flower arrangement. But Sō-ami was specially famous for his talent in the art of gardening. The garden of the Ginkakuji Temple is said to have been of his design. As for the art of flower arrangement, there is a book called "Gojō Shiki-moku," the writing of which is attributed to him. The book shows his deep knowledge in the art, and also makes clear the great influence which he exerted upon the art of flower arrangement at that time.

The Temple Rokkakudō and Ikenobō Senkō

Besides Sō-ami, there are in this period Ritsu-ami and Mon-ami who were both famous in the floral art. Ritsu-ami was an attendant of Yoshimasa, and as appears in his diary, was often asked by the Shōgun to arrange flowers. After Sō-ami came Ikenobō, the priest



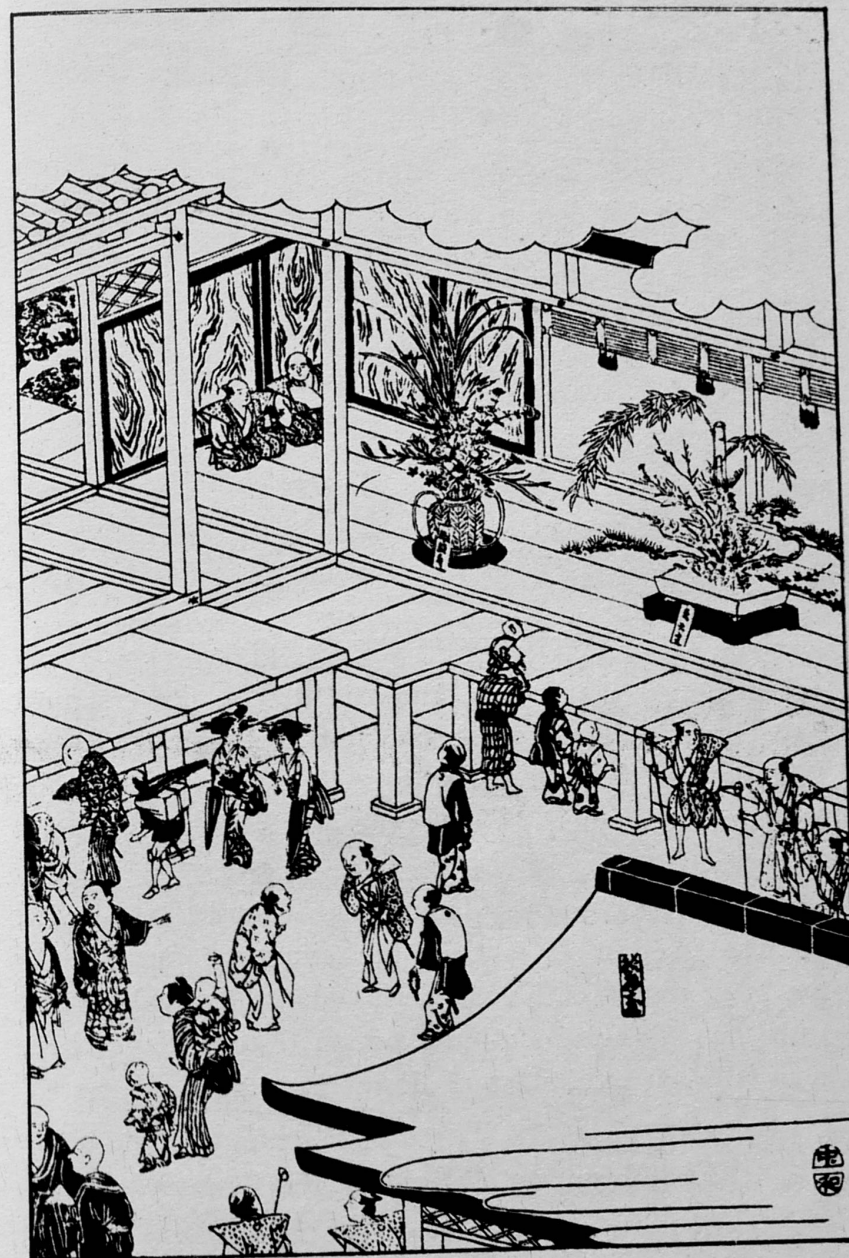
Hall of flower arrangement—Rokkakudō in Kyoto

of a temple called Rokkakudō in Kyoto, who later so distinguished himself as priest and master of flower arrangement that he became the founder of the priesthood at Rokkakudō and the school of floral art, both bearing his name. The Ikenobō School has existed for more than four hundred years and is proud of having the longest tradition and also the largest number of students throughout the country.

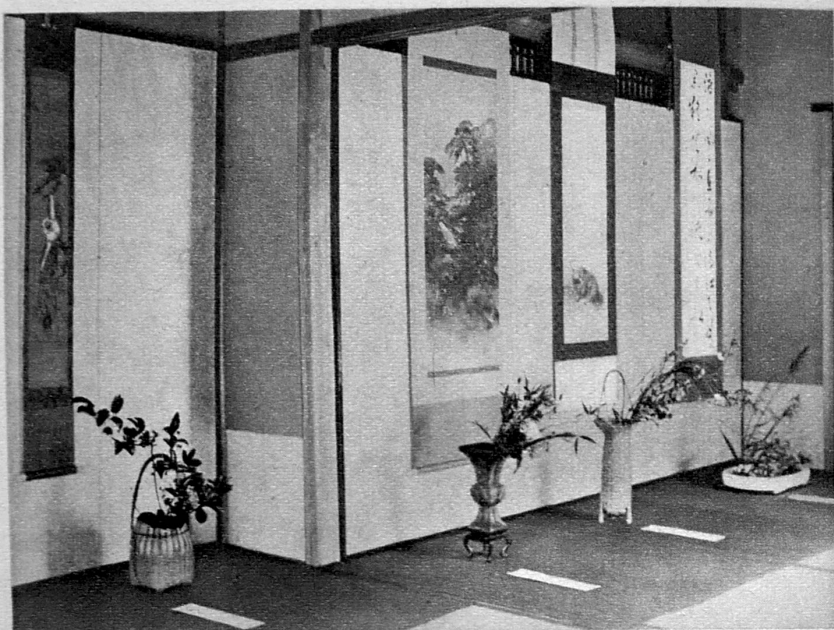
Among the masters of the Ikenobō School the one who specially excelled in the floral art was Ikenobō Senkō, who flourished in the 17th century. For the first time in the history of the art he is said to have arranged cherry blossoms in a vase so beautifully and so attractively that ever since the style has been called "Senkō's Single Colour Arrangement of Cherry Flowers." A sketch of it is still extant, and to this day the style has been kept up by his followers as one of his great secrets.

The following story is told of Senkō, the master of floral art :

One day a party was held at the house of Konoe Ōzan, a powerful aristocrat of those days. It happened that Senkō had just returned home from his travels and called on him just before the tea ceremony was to begin. The master of the house was greatly pleased that he had come, and requested him to go to the tea house and arrange the flowers for him. This Senkō did. However, in tea ceremony as a rule, the flowers should be arranged by the host himself. And when the host, violating this rule, invited the guest into the room, the guest at once perceived that his host had



Flower arrangement party in the 18th century



Flower arrangement party today

not arranged the flowers and said, "The flowers must have been arranged by Senkō himself. But as I hear that he has been travelling these days, may I ask when he returned home?" Thus the host's trick was easily discovered.

Rokkakudō or the "Hexagonal Temple" (so-called because the temple is built in hexagonal form) is in the busy section of Kyoto, and holds its festival on the 17th day of each month. And on festival days there is usually an exhibition of flower arrangement.

The Shishinden Palace and the Emperor

Gomizunowo

The coronation of the successive Emperors, to which

the military and civil officers of the State and envoys and ambassadors from foreign countries are invited, is held at the Shishinden Palace in Kyoto. This palace has a very interesting connection with the history of Japanese floral art.

During the 17th century a certain Emperor took great interest in the art and mastered it himself. Because of this, a great many courtiers, nobles and high officials gathered together at court, and the art of flower arrangement became very fashionable among them. A hall had been provided in the court for the tea ceremony, to which all the masters of tea ceremony were invited, and an exhibition of flower arrangement was held to the delight of all the cultured people. The Emperor's own art was exhibited in the court, while that of high officials or of the masters among the commoners was shown in the house which had been temporarily built for that purpose in the garden before the palace. An account of this significant event in the history of Japanese floral art is given in a book called "Kwai-Ki." The author compares the event with the great tea party held by Toyotomi Hideyoshi of historic fame. Such exhibitions of flower arrangement were held frequently during the 18th and 19th centuries, but that the Emperor himself should appear as an exemplar of the art and show his own productions to the public is quite rare. That the palace which is the centre of political affairs should thus be opened for floral art is unique in the annals of the Empire.

This wise and cultured ruler was the Emperor Gomizunowo, who had, besides a mastery of flower

arrangement, an appreciation of gardening. The garden in the Shugakuin Villa in Kyoto, which is regarded as a representative garden in Japan, was created at this Emperor's request, and it seems that he had often visited the garden during his lifetime. As there are many points common both to flower arrangement and gardening, the garden must have been laid out in a large measure according to the Emperor's own design.



Basket and china vase

VI. TWO GREAT SCHOOLS OF FLOWER ARRANGEMENT— THEIR HISTORY

The Formal School versus the Natural School

The best-known style of flower arrangement in Japan is probably the one called *ten-chi-jin* or heaven-earth-man. Lately *nageire*, or the thrown-in style, has come into vogue. Besides these two, however, there has been a still older style called *rikkwa*, or the standing style. Of the *nageire* style there have been two schools, the older and the newer. Of course, there have been innumerable schools or styles belonging to both of these. But we may note that there have been roughly four great schools, and these four may be classified into two groups, namely, the formal and the natural.

The term *ikebana* came to be applied to the floral art of Japan in the early part of the 19th century, before which the term *rikkwa* had been synonymous with the art. The *rikkwa* in its day was more complex and solemn in form than the *ikebana* style, and was called the "true style," being considered the only correct and representative form of the art.

The *rikkwa* style has a definite form of arrangement, which is called the "seven branches." This later developed into the "nine," and still later into the "eleven branches," when the art became a pastime

of the upper classes. The "seven branches" are as follows :

1. *Shin* the heart
2. *Shō-shin* . . . the smaller heart
3. *Mikoshi-eda* . the cross branch
4. *Uke-eda* . . . the receiving branch
5. *Nagashi-eda* the running branch
6. *Hikae-eda* . . the waiting branch
7. *Mae-oki* . . . the introducing branch.

To these the following may be added to make the eleven branch form :

8. *Dō* the trunk
9. *Soe-eda* . . . the added branch
10. *Kidome* . . . the stopping branch
11. *Kusadome* . . the stopping grass.

The *ten-chi-jin* style is a simplification of the *rik-kwa* style, as all the superfluous branches of the *rik-kwa* having been done away with, it is regarded as a new school of formal arrangement.

In the days when the *rik-kwa* style was thought to be the only correct form of flower arrangement, there was also a quite informal style of arrangement, in which a few branches or flowers were placed casually into a vase. This arrangement was called *nageire*, the thrown-in style. The flowers arranged in a vase which was hanging on the wall, or those in a boat-shaped vase hanging from the ceiling were also called *nageire*. These simple forms of arrangement were at first regarded as unimportant, very much like the supplements to newspapers or magazines we see today, but later they developed into a school powerful enough to compete

with the *rik-kwa*, because the style, being very light and free from formalism, appealed to many people. Thus in time there came to exist two distinct schools. At one time one school predominated, and at another time the other school flourished. The popularity of the thrown-in style was, however, greatly strengthened by *cha-no-yu* as the *cha-no-yu* house must be provided with a *tokonoma* just like one in an ordinary home, which is invariably decorated with at least a picture and some flowers. But since the tea house is a simply built one, devoid of all other ornaments, the picture and flowers in the *tokonoma* must necessarily be simple and natural in order to be in harmony with the house. This is the reason why the *nageire* form of the art has been better adapted to *cha-no-yu* than the complicated style of *rik-kwa*. And the vogue of *cha-no-yu* has in fact thus brought about a deeper appreciation of the *nageire* style. Those who had learned and appreciated the tea ceremony came likewise to learn and appreciate this simple and natural form of floral art.

As days went on the art of flower arrangement became fashionable among the aristocrats, and gradually spread among the common people. The complicated style of *rik-kwa*, however, was not for the common taste, and even the simpler style of *nageire* was beyond their appreciation. For this reason there came to exist a new school taking the place of *rik-kwa*. This was the *ten-chi-jin* style, to be specially welcomed by the merchant class of the country.

If we look back now over the history of the art of floral arrangement in the past four hundred and sixty

years, we may see that a change has taken place every hundred years. In the first hundred years both *rikkwa* and *nageire*, either in the *shin* or the *sō* form, were admired by the people. The next hundred years constituted the golden age for *nageire*. This was followed by a period of *rikkwa*. Then came a period of *nageire* again, after which a newer form of *rikkwa* or the *ten-chi-jin* style flourished. Today we witness again the rise of *nageire*, though it is in a slightly modified form, or new *nageire* style. These ups and downs in the history of the art may be tabulated as follows:

First period—Higashiyama Period (15th century)—period for both *rikkwa* and *nageire*.

Second period—Momoyama Period (16th century)—the golden age of *nageire*.

Third period—from the early Tokugawa to the middle Tokugawa Period (17th century)—*rikkwa* flourished among the aristocrats.

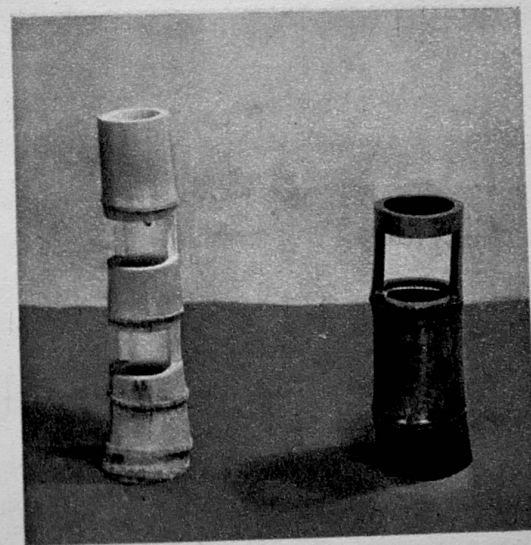
Fourth period—the middle Tokugawa Period (18th century)—*nageire* flourished among the common people.

Fifth period—the late Tokugawa Period (19th century)—the age of *ten-chi-jin* style.

Sixth period—present day (20th century)—the age of new *nageire*, or *bun-jin-ike*.

Some people may imagine that flower arrangement is only a traditional art of Japan, the forms of which were fixed centuries ago. But the fact is, as I have shown above, that its form has varied with every age, and one may expect such changes in the future as well. Unlike its sister arts of *cha-no-yu* and the *noh* drama, which have undergone very few changes in their his-

tory, since their forms were fixed nearly four hundred years ago, the art of floral arrangement alone has been subject to many vicissitudes in history. One may wonder at the fact that both the *noh* drama and *cha-no-yu* have existed apart from the actual life of the people, while the art of flower arrangement has had a vital connection with daily life. In other words, the *noh* drama has had its own stage, and *cha-no-yu* the tea house for the appreciation of its own art. But flower arrangement has had no such advantage. It has existed in the homes of the people and has become a necessary part of their daily life. Therefore the changes in the art may be taken as a matter of course. In this respect, I think, the art of flower arrangement resembles Japanese painting more than the tea ceremony or *noh* drama.



Bamboo vases

VII. RIKKWA AND NAGEIRE

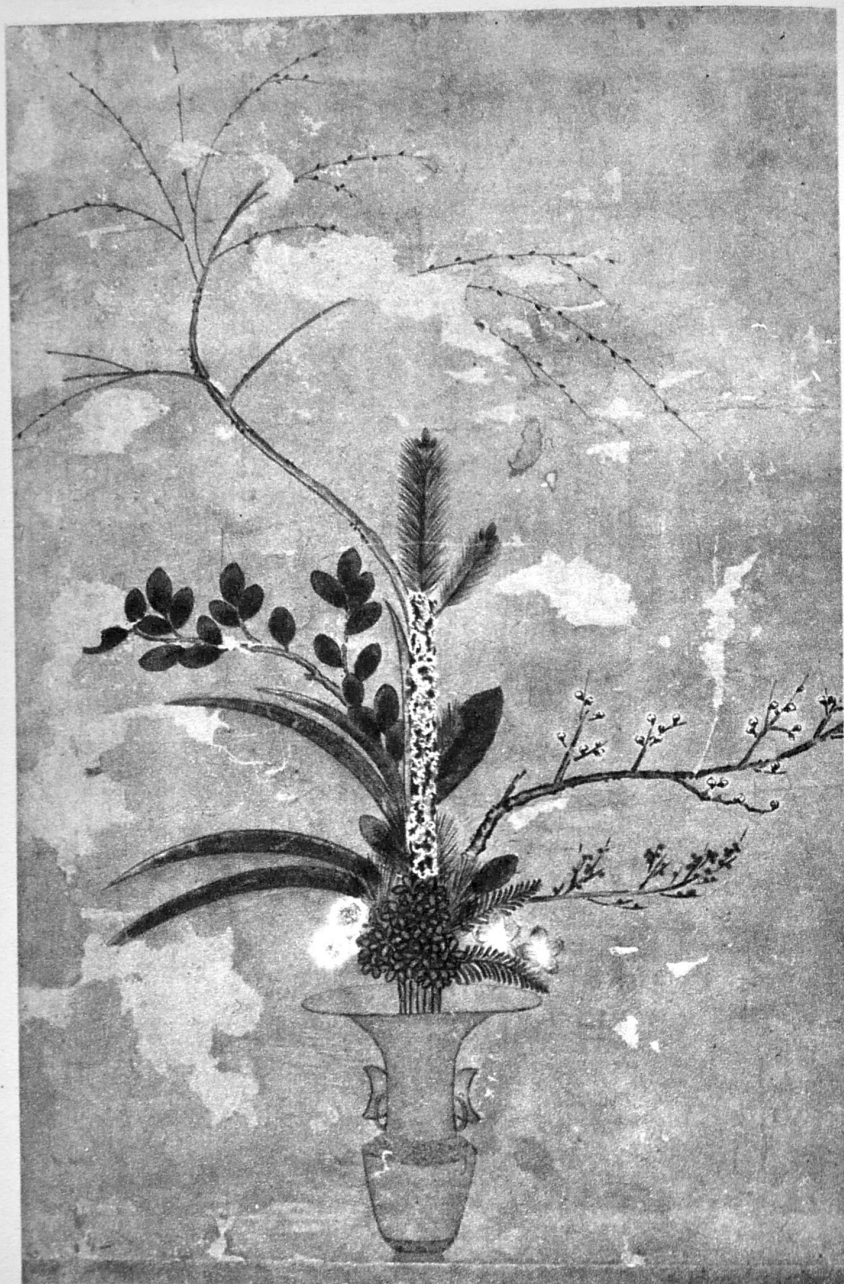
Both the *rikkwa* and *ten-chi-jin* styles are formal, while the *nageire* style is free and natural. The difference between these two styles, however, may appear very slight to foreigners, though it is quite clear to the Japanese eye. But the differences in the method of arrangement may be very easily discerned. *Rikkwa* and *ten-chi-jin* both have a flower-holder at the mouth of the vase. This holder is a wisp of straw in the *rikkwa*, and in the *ten-chi-jin* is a forked tree branch or twigs crossed like the letter X, through which the flowers or branches are to be arranged. In *ten-chi-jin* the length and the angle of each branch, or of heaven, earth, and man, are fixed, whereas in *rikkwa* the *shin* branch is arranged vertically, the other branches being put at the left, the right, and in front of it. These branches may be tied with wire to the *shin* or main branch, and a bamboo water-container filled with flowers may be attached to the middle of the main branch. The water-container is usually covered with large tree leaves such as the leaves of the loquat.

Such a use of wire, bamboo water-container, and the like, in the *rikkwa* style, if regarded as mere decoration, need be no obstacle to its appreciation by generously minded people. But to most Japanese, who are always particular about even minor details in any art, and regard flowers as something sacred to

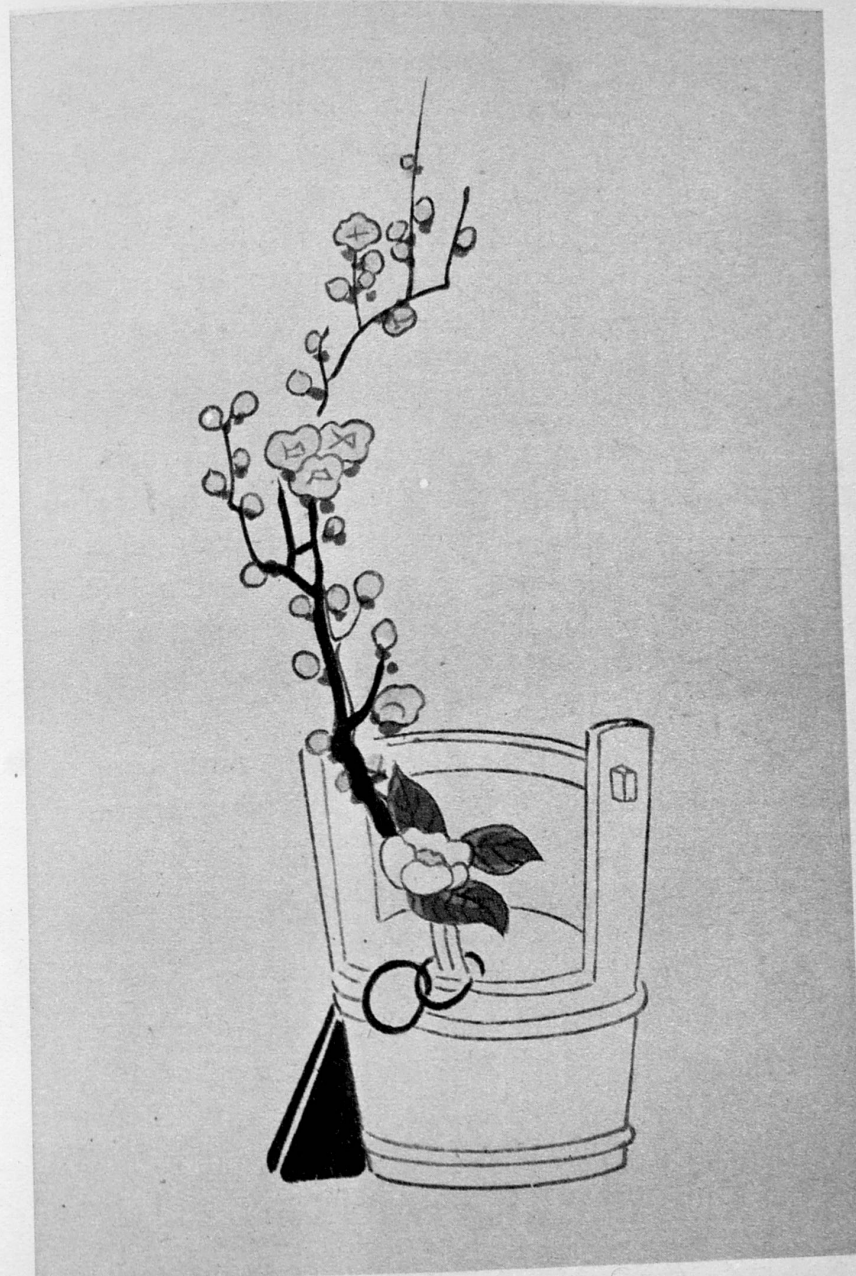
natural life, these devices or inventions are really sacrilegious and hence repulsive. The love of naturalness, especially in connection with flower arrangement, seems to be one of the characteristics of the Orient, as the same thought is found in the writings of a certain Chinese on floral art. He, too, observes that the binding of the roots or branches in flower arrangement is really sacrilegious to the art.

The school which has abolished all these devices in arrangement is *nageire* or the thrown-in style. According to this style, flowers are to be arranged in a vase as naturally as possible, no matter what the flowers or branches may be. Of course, there must be some balance or beauty maintained, even when the branches are not all made to stand perpendicularly. To illustrate this, a beautiful stream cannot be obtained simply by digging a formal ditch for water to run in; to be beautiful the stream must make its own natural way. The fundamental conception is that great beauty will be found wherever there is no artificiality. To find and express natural beauty in whatever or wherever it may be is the end and aim of *nageire*—the simple and natural form of flower arrangement.

The materials to be used in floral art are natural flowers, leaves or branches of trees. It may be supposed that all flowers are alike. Yet upon examination they will be found to be quite different from one another, just as human faces, though they seem to be of the same cast, are really different from one another. This is the view held by a certain master of floral art. If the forms of flower arrangement were rigidly pre-



Flowers arranged in *rikkwa* style, from "Rikkwa Flower Screen"
(Tokyo Imperial Museum)



Thrown-in style in the 18th century—Red plum blossoms
and camellias arranged in a wooden pail

scribed as in the *rikkwa* or the *ten-chi-jin* style, there would be very little room for variation or personal expression. The forms to which the flowers or branches are subject will become forced and unnatural, the result being always characterized by uniformity, and consequently quite uninteresting. The truth of this statement is attested by the pictures which show the ancient forms of the art of *rikkwa*. Take, for instance, a picture of lotus flowers in the *rikkwa* style found in the book called "Contemporary Rikkwa Style," published about 1700. The lotus flower represented there is unnaturally twisted to conform to the *rikkwa* or the standing style. As this style is primarily for the arrangement of trees, such plants as the lotus having a form entirely different from trees are hardly suitable for this style of arrangement. The result of such arrangement and its esthetic value can easily be imagined.

Therefore from the standpoint of flower arrangement as the art of appreciation of natural flowers, *nageire*, which does not prescribe any rigid rules for flower arrangement but leaves room for variation according to the nature of the flower, is more rational and progressive than *rikkwa* which invariably prescribes rules for all the flowers. Perhaps one may wonder why men in those early days did not awaken to this obvious truth. To this we may simply answer that it was due to their inability, in those early days of art, to understand the real nature of things.

We owe our real understanding of *nageire* to the great man Hideyoshi, who often invited his master of tea ceremony, Sen-no-Rikyū, to arrange flowers for him.

We are told that he invited this master even to his war-camp because of his enjoyment of the art. Moreover, he himself, it is said, took pains to learn flower arrangement. A certain master of tea ceremony tells in his diary that one day when he was invited to a tea party held at the Osaka castle, then the palace of Hideyoshi, he saw some daffodils beautifully arranged in the *tokonoma*, which, to his great surprise, was Hideyoshi's own art.

Rikyū, the master of tea ceremony, was equally famous for the art of flower arrangement, and specially skilled in the *nageire* style. This is evidenced by the fact that he stood high in the estimation of Hideyoshi, and also because his style in the *nageire* school has preserved his name to this day. He conceived the art of *nageire* to be essentially spiritual. Hence he left no book or writing on the subject. He seems to have considered the art as hardly admitting of any explanation in words. To him words seem to have been inadequate to communicate the true meaning of the art. When Nanbō, one of his disciples, (as is told in his writings) one day showed his master the notes he had taken from Rikyū's instruction in the floral art, and asked him if they were true, the master answered that they were true, but that such writings would be misleading to posterity, and so advised him to burn all he had written.

In the notes taken down by Nanbō there is a saying attributed to Sen-no-Rikyū, that most detestable of all in the thrown-in style is to make an interesting show of your arrangement. The best in the floral art,

he seems to say, is the unforced, or natural. Of course, what is found in nature will often be fragmentary, and therefore can hardly be called an art. The emphasis laid by Rikyū is upon the naturalness of arrangement. He is here cautioning against the overdoing of decoration or artificiality. The deeper one penetrates into the understanding of nature, the more conscious will he become that natural beauty far surpasses the artificial, and he will appreciate simple and unadorned beauty more than anything else. Then these words of Rikyū will become most significant in the appreciation of the art of simple and natural arrangement, or *nageire*.

Again, when we consider the age in which Rikyū was born, we may realize the value of his saying. Born in the age of the civil wars, or in the latter part of the 16th century, and having lived seventy years, this man must have seen many of the evils of civil war, and though his ability was recognized in later years by Hideyoshi, yet his tragic life ended in opposition to this great warrior.

It is indeed interesting enough to think that this tragic man, being born in such an age of bloodshed and slaughter, lived all his life ever hateful of artificiality as the source of all evils, and insisted on naturalness in all things, especially in the art of flower arrangement, as being the true fount of life and beauty. Men born in a peaceful age sought beauty in artificiality, while those born in the age of turmoil and war found beauty and true joy only in things simple and natural. Above all, the fact that a man's attitude towards flowers reflects the character of the age in which

he was born can never fail to interest students of flower arrangement who are concerned with the art in its relation to life.



Thrown-in style in the 18th century—Japanese globe-flowers and iris arranged in a basket-vase on the wall.

VIII. RIKKWA—"A LITTLE GARDEN WITHIN THE HOUSE"

Some may think that the difference between *rikkwa* and *nageire* is in the degree of fixity in the forms of arrangement, one being rigid and the other comparatively free. A closer examination, however, will show that there is also a difference in feeling, which comes from the fact that *nageire* tries to represent only one aspect of nature, while *rikkwa* makes an attempt at representing nature in miniature. True, one may say that even *rikkwa* can never represent nature in its entirety, however much it may try. Therefore, one may say that the difference between the two schools is after all one of degree, and not of kind. However, the two ways of representation differ widely. For example, take a branch of cherry blossom. In *nageire*, the arrangement consists of cherry blossoms only, while in *rikkwa*, besides a cherry branch, branches of the pine, cedar, cypress, bamboo, camellia, and even azalea are used to help in creating a background for a mountain cherry tree. The latter school requires many other flowers or trees in order to show the beauty of one species of tree in its arrangement, while the former needs no such superfluities. Thus *rikkwa* usually gives one a feeling of overloading the vase, as it combines two or sometimes three species of trees or flowers in its



arrangement. This perhaps may be overlooked, and yet, to represent a landscape by means of flower arrangement is to approximate floral art to that of gardening. And although landscape gardening may have some elements in common with floral art, since both make use of natural flowers and trees, these two arts—landscape gardening and floral arrangement—should be kept distinct and never be confused with each other.

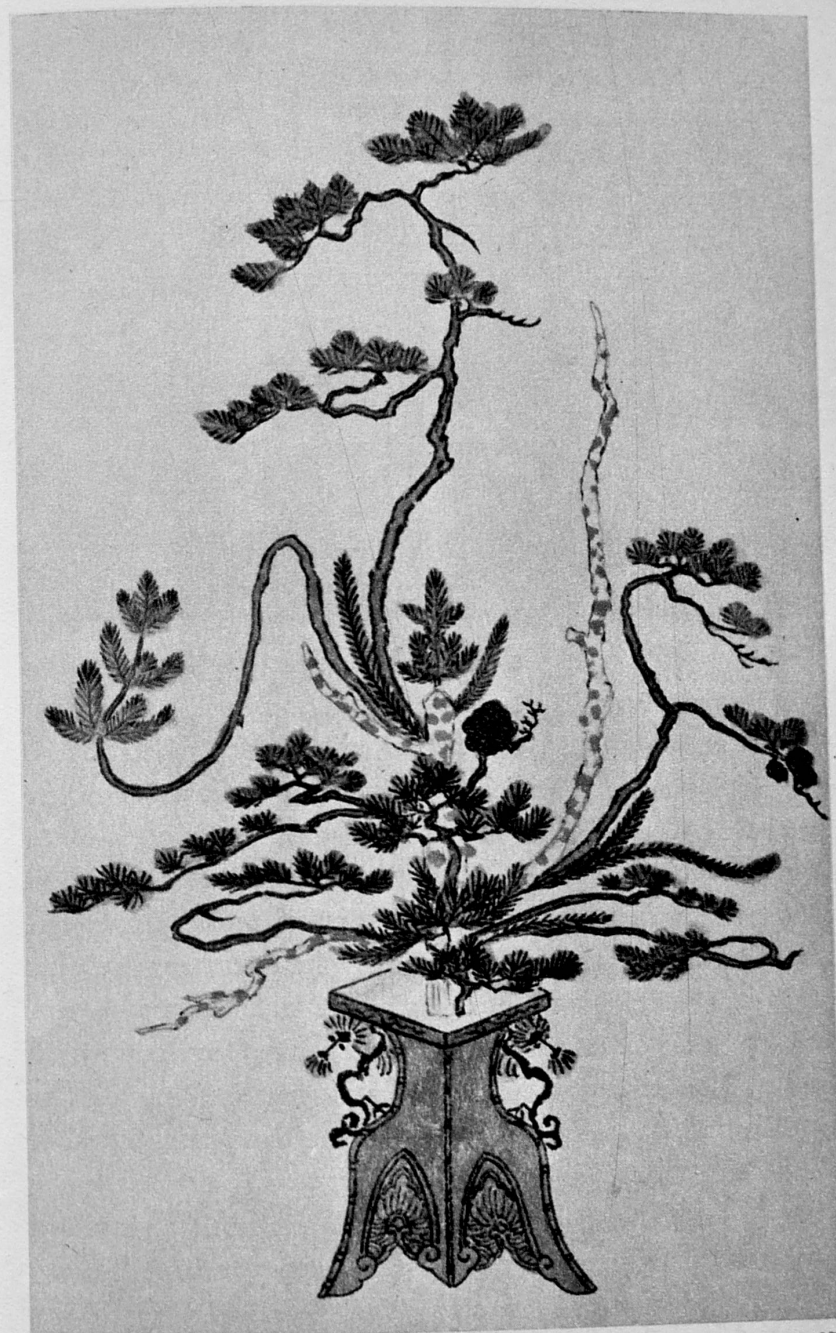
In any case, when one looks at *rikkwa*, one cannot help thinking that by means of flower arrangement it has built up a miniature landscape; hence the *rikkwa* style may better be called "a little garden within the house."

In *rikkwa* there is always a pine tree of five or six feet in height arranged in the centre of the vase. This tree represents the beauty of Japanese landscape, since the pine is an indispensable element in the sandy

seashore scenery or mountain views, and especially in the mountain scenery at Kyoto. You will invariably find some pine trees in the famous gardens of Kyoto, and even in the small gardens of farmers in the country around that ancient city. Besides pine trees, the most important trees for a garden, as well as for the *rikkwa* style of arrangement, are cedars, cypresses, and bamboo. Thus it may easily be seen that the elements or materials constituting a garden are the same as those in flower arrangement, as far as the *rikkwa* style is concerned.

In the garden, however, there are, besides trees and flowers, rocks or stones, and water, though as a rule no flowers were cultivated in gardens after the 17th century, it being thought that flowers in the garden might lessen the effect of those arranged in the *tokonoma*. In any case, important materials which produced the beauty of landscape gardening were invariably utilized in the *rikkwa* style of floral art. This might have been an incidental result, as the *rikkwa* school had at first no intention of creating a miniature landscape garden through floral arrangement. But the founder of the *rikkwa* school was the famous landscape gardener, Sō-ami, and therefore the suspicion that he may have arranged flowers just as he would have laid out a garden may not be unreasonable. And it would make no difference whether or not he was conscious that the same principle was operating in him, if the result in either art was virtually identical.

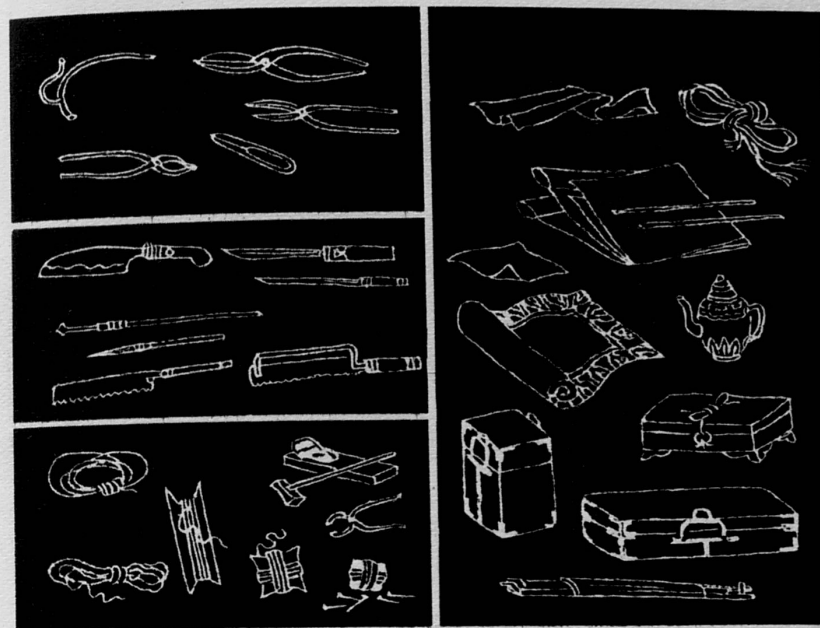
So keeping this in mind, if one looks at *rikkwa* more closely, one will find some other things which



greatly resemble gardening. There is *sunamono* ("sand-arrangement"), which is an arrangement of flowers in a bronze vase, in which is spread white sand. It has been called "sand-arrangement" since sand is always used, and the vase is called a sand-vase. In the days of Sō-ami white sand covered a part of the garden ground. In the Ginkakuji garden you may see white sand, upon which the traces of sea-waves are represented by the sweeping of bamboo brooms. White sand is found in such gardens as those belonging to the Daitokuji Temple, the Ryōanji Temple, Nanzenji Temple, and other famous temples in Kyoto. The green pine trees growing in the white sand suggest perhaps to one that since Kyoto is in a mountainous district, far from the seashore, the people there planted green pine trees amid white sea-sands in their gardens as the symbol of the land of their heart's desire.

In the same period in which *rikkwa* flourished there was also in use a form of decoration popularly called *bonseki*. *Bonseki* consists of a lacquered wooden plate partly covered with white sand and with a stone upon the sand. It is intended to suggest a rock by the seashore, or a seascape. This artificial landscape represented by *bonseki* may be regarded as one means of expressing the artistic sense for gardening by supplying one of the essential elements in a garden, namely, a stone. But stones are not used in the *rikkwa* style of floral art.

Again, the use of the term *rikkwa*, "standing flowers," in contrast to the ordinary term *ikebana*, "arranging flowers," to signify that the central flower



is arranged in vertical position in the vase, and the frequent use of *risseki*, "standing stones," instead of a term meaning "arranging stones," in laying out a garden, shows that there were here elements common to both *rikkwa* and the art of gardening.

The *rikkwa* style or school has become old-fashioned; it is now an antiquated form of the floral art. As it was not able to maintain itself, it has lost its hold upon the people of today, and is therefore rarely seen. For information on the subject the student of this style of arrangement now has to resort to the Ikenobō School at Kyoto, which is perhaps the only school which has preserved this form, or to the ceremonies of the Shin sect, the Jōdo sect, or the Zen sect (in which this style of arrangement is often presented), or to the old books and pictures depicting this style of

arrangement.

About forty years ago I learned this style from my father and continued its study for a number of years. The above statement in regard to the *rikkwa* style is therefore the result of study based upon my own experience and also upon standard writings on the subject.

The illustrations

Sunamono, the sand arrangement, in the 17th or 18th century
(Facing page 63)

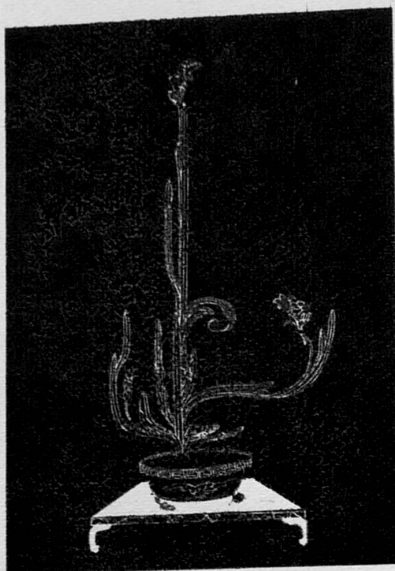
Rikkwa, the standing style of floral art, in the 17th or 18th century (Facing page 65)

Instruments used in *rikkwa*, in the 17th or 18th century
(Facing page 67)

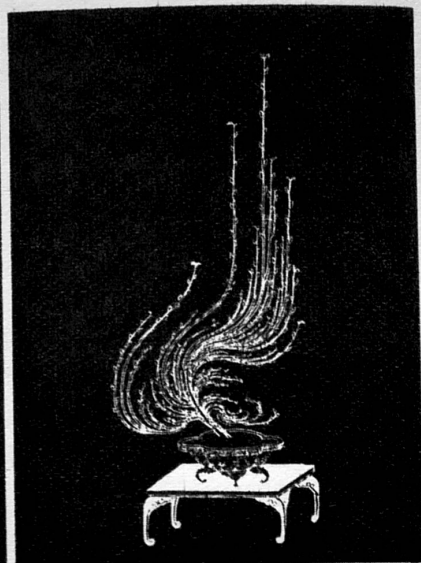
IX. TWO NEW SCHOOLS OF FLORAL ART—TEN-CHI-JIN AND BUNJIN-IKE

Ten-chi-jin, or the heaven-earth-man style, and *bunjin-ike*, or the literati style, are both new schools in the art of flower arrangement, the former belonging to *rikkwa*, the standing style, and the latter to *nageire*, the thrown-in style.

The beginnings of the *ten-chi-jin* school date from the middle of the 19th century. The founder of the school was Mishōsai Ippo, who later came to be better known as the originator of the Mishō School. The nature and characteristics of the school *ten-chi-jin* may be best illustrated by a concrete example. Suppose there are three branches of cherry blossoms of different length to be arranged. The longest branch will be called *ten*, heaven, the medium length *jin*, man, the shortest *chi*, earth. The heaven branch will be put in the middle of the vase, the man branch at one side, and the earth branch in front of the heaven branch. If lines are drawn passing through the end of each branch, an irregular triangle will be formed. According to this school of flower arrangement, the form must be triangular. The art of flower arrangement as taught by this school was, no doubt, very simple at the beginning, but as time went on, the followers of the school became tired of its simplicity and monotony, and began



Ten-chi-jin style in the 19th century
—Daffodils in a flower-dish



Ten-chi-jin style in the 19th century
—Purple willows in a vase

to seek some variety and complexity in their arrangements. Thus we find that by the end of the 19th century, having completely lost sight of their original purpose, which was only to express the simple and natural beauty of flowers and trees, the *ten-chi-jin* group had come to resort to such devices as wooden stoppers and metal wire. And they seem to have been perfectly satisfied with a form of art which appears to us to-day no better than a piece of artificiality. They were apparently untroubled at the unnaturalness or forced beauty of their arrangements, which some of them might have detected, since they were concerned only with flowers and trees which were pliable enough to yield them their favourite patterns or designs. Their favourite trees and flowers were such as the parlour

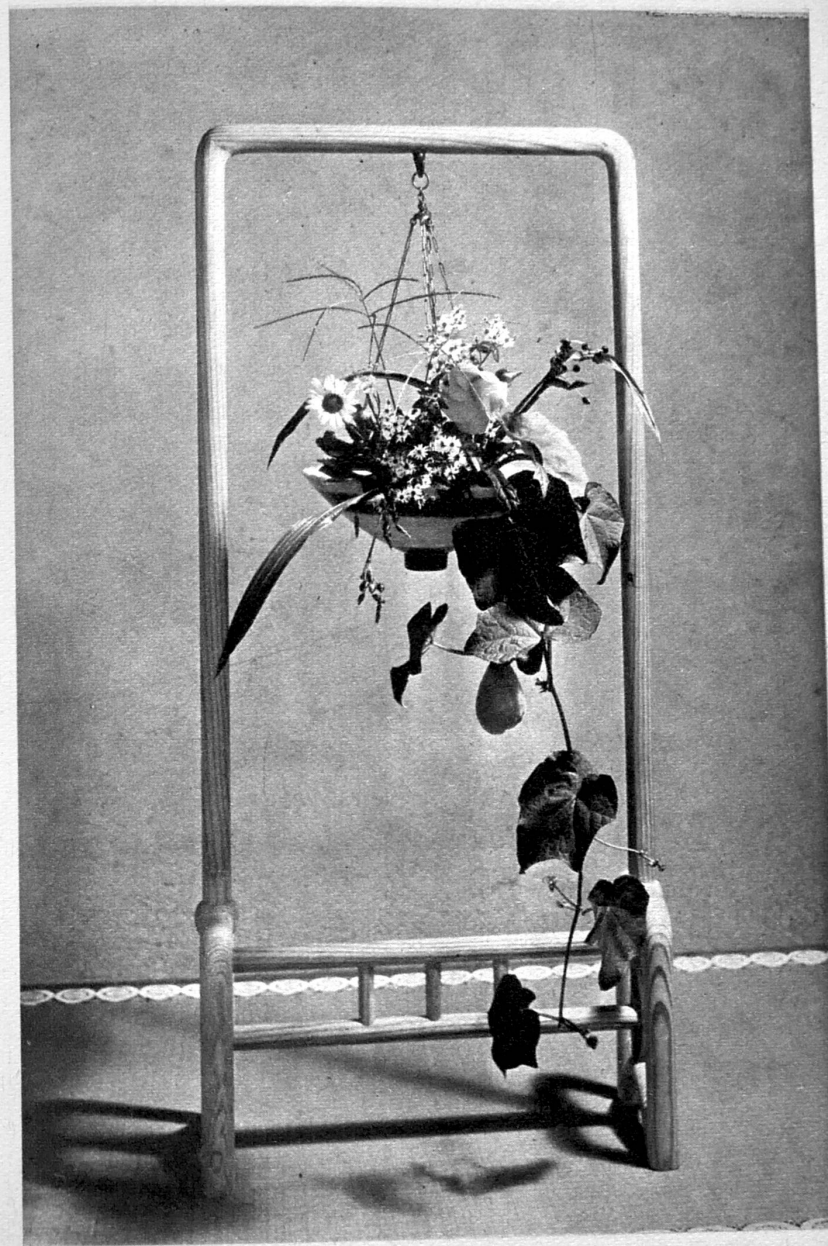


Ten-chi-jin style in the 19th century—Parlour palms
arranged in a square vase

palm, *itasugi* (cypress), *podocarpus chinensis*, the Scotch broom, the purple willow, the basket willow, and the *enkō* willow.

The *ten-chi-jin* school, though it may indicate the nimbleness of the Japanese finger and a love of minuteness or subtlety, hardly deserves to be regarded as having much esthetic or cultural value. It is rather a decadent form of the art, and hence it cannot be regarded as of much significance. But from the standpoint of the architectural use of nature, or fashioning nature into a design, or of providing house decoration, it is undoubtedly of great value. Moreover, it is in harmony with Western style of architecture rather than with simple and almost artless Japanese forms. Hence the Western student may find in it much to interest him, especially as it contains, I think, great possibilities for developing a new school of floral art in the West.

New *nageire*, or the new school of thrown-in style, hitherto called *bunjin-ike*, differs from old *nageire*, or the old school of thrown-in style, in many ways. The term *bunjin-ike* came to be applied to the new school of thrown-in style since it originated in the *bun-jin* school of Japanese painting. The *bun-jin* (literati) pictures developed in Japan under the influence of Chinese painting at the end of the 18th century. As a school of Japanese painting, therefore, it is of comparatively recent development. Among the masters of this school of painting are Ikeno Taiga, Yosa Buson, Tani Bunchō, Tanomura Chikuden. The lovers of this new school of painting came to enjoy a new style of tea ceremony called *sencha*, which resembles more the Chinese than



Present-day flower arrangement—Hayato melon vine and grass flowers



Present-day flower arrangement—Pampas grass
and *mokuge* in a basket with handle

the hitherto existing Japanese tea ceremony. With this new tea ceremony came a new school of floral art, which was no other than *bunjin-ike*.

Bunjin-ike departs greatly from the traditions of Japanese floral art. If compared with other forms of flower arrangement, it is more like amateur arrangement, or, one might say, a free style drawing. But because of its amateurishness it is characterized by freedom from conventionality, and newness of spirit. The birth of this new school is attributed to the painters of so-called *bunjin-gwa*, or the literati pictures, among whom the most famous was Tanomura Chikuden, who was very fond of the new school of floral art and wrote concerning it. His book is still extant. But in the days of Chikuden, those who really appreciated the new school of art were very few, perhaps only the men who associated with him and loved *sencha*. In the Meiji Era, however, the new style attracted more attention, as it found a spokesman in the learned man Hosokawa Junjirō, who wrote on the subject and published a work entitled "Nenge Bishō" (Beaming Eyes at the Flowers Arranged in Water). Even then the public paid very little attention to the new school. It is only in the last twenty years that the beauty and worth of the art have come to be recognized by the public. It is this art which has replaced the *ten-chi-jin* school, and come to be recognized as representative of the Japanese floral art, and which is now called *shin nageire*, or the new thrown-in style.

The difference between the new and the old in *nageire* does not seem very clear even to the Japanese.

As a matter of fact, it can never be clearly understood by any except those who have been initiated into this new school of the art. The new school is characterized by greater freedom, candidness, variety, and gaiety, while the old school, having been influenced by the tea ceremony, has been simple, sombre, plain, and somewhat over-scrupulous and methodical in character. The origin of these differences is to be found in the fact that the one was born of the strict, colourless, and very simple life of the masters of tea ceremony, while the other is to be traced to the care-free, colourful, and active life of the artists of the literati school. It is difficult, however, to find such clear-cut distinctions today, since in these days so many forms of the past schools have come to be intermingled, and a pure style has come to be as rare a thing in floral art as in all other forms of art today. Strictly speaking, the *ikebana* of Japan today is neither that of *bunjin-ike* nor that of old *nageire*. It is perhaps a combination of all these past forms plus some new elements, which is in the process of forming a new school of floral art for the Japan of tomorrow.

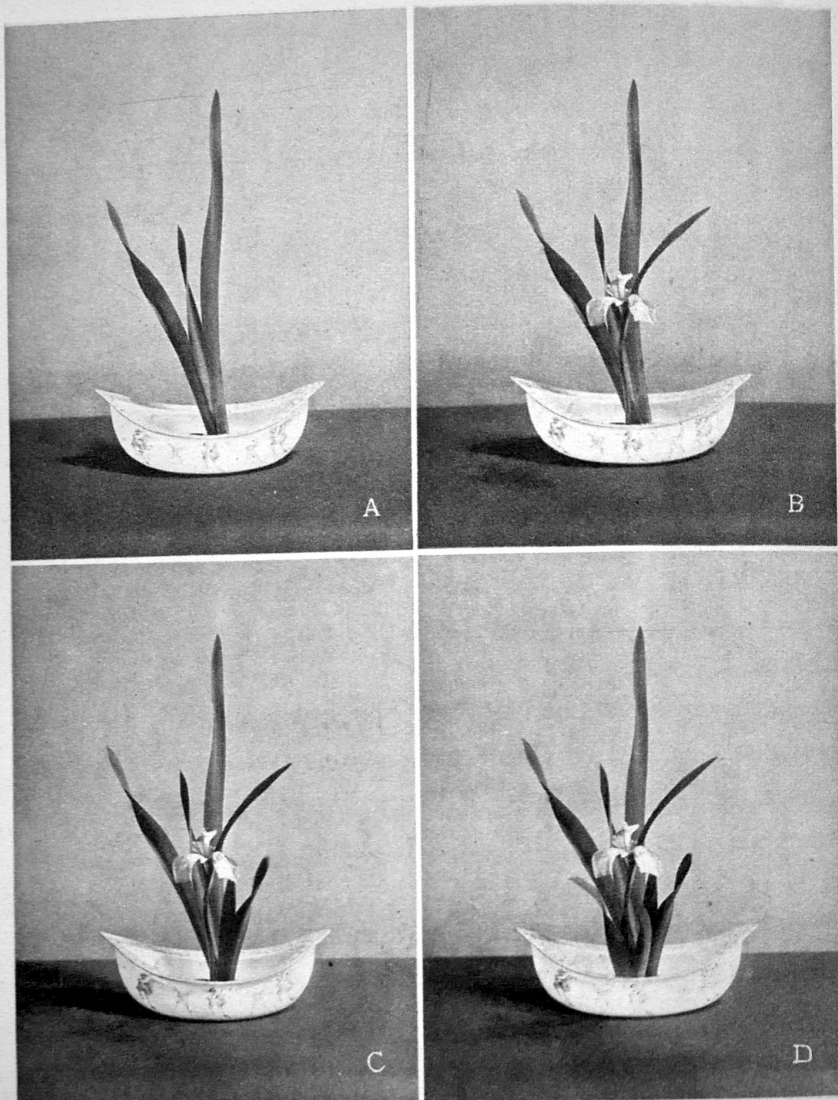
X. HOW TO ARRANGE FLOWERS

The number of flowers or branches to be arranged in a vase varies from two to eight or nine, according to the size of the vase and the nature of the flowers or branches. One branch may sometimes be sufficient, but usually a single branch or flower makes too simple an arrangement to be satisfying, since it is obvious, for instance, that the situation becomes geometrically complicated by the simple mathematical addition of one branch, say C, to the two already arranged branches A and B. So at least two or three branches should be used.

Suppose there are three branches to be arranged, namely, A, B, C. The main serving branch A will be called *shin*, the centre; B acting upon A will be called *hazumi*, the "boulder"; C inserted between A and B will be called *tome*, the "stopper." *Shin*, the centre, forming the backbone of the arrangement; *hazumi*, the "boulder," the variety; and *tome*, the "stopper," the conclusion: these three constitute the service branches of flower arrangement.

When these three branches do not seem sufficient, however, or when there is something lacking in form, another branch may be added. All the branches arranged after the main service branches have been arranged are called "added branches."

When arranging flowers, one should put the tray



Order in the Arrangement of Iris

- A. The service leaves arranged
- B. Flowers inserted among the service leaves
- C. *Hazumi* the "boulder" leaves added
- D. The stopping leaves added, and arrangement completed

containing all the flowers necessary for arrangement to his right, and a flower vase in front of him about two feet away. It is easier to arrange flowers if the vase is very near, but in order to view the flowers while they are being arranged, it is better to keep it as far away as possible. Also, the position of the vase should be a little higher than the level of the eye. The proper position, I think, is somewhere between one's chair and the level of the eye. It is better to have it too high rather than too low, because if the vase is too low, one is apt to look down on the flowers when arranging them, and consequently the flowers will look quite different from what they were intended to look like when the arrangement is completed. The most important of all, however, is what the Japanese call *mizugiwa*, the water's edge, or the point where the flowers come into contact with the water in the vase. This point often escapes the eye if the vase is placed too low while making the arrangement, and when all is finished, it may appear very awkward or clumsy, and thus may ruin the entire effect of the art.

Selection of Flowers

It is of primary importance to examine the shape and size of the vase in which flowers are to be arranged before the selection of flowers is made, since the arrangement depends largely upon the size of the vase's mouth, as also its width and depth. To think of the security or fixity of each flower or branch is, of course, necessary, but at the same time it is well to keep in mind the fact that some flowers may look best if ar-



Showing the position of the vase in relation to the tray

ranged in a vertical position, slantwise, or extending sideways—all these positions depend upon the shape or figure of the vase.

After an examination of the vase comes the selection of flowers. Taking them one by one from the flower tray, and carefully noting the front and back of each leaf and flower, one may choose the service branches, i. e. the centre, the "bounder," and the "stopper." The selection of these branches is very important, as it ultimately determines the success or failure of one's art. One may think that he has made very careful observation, but a master of arrangement may sometimes point out to him that he has not at all observed the important points of the flowers or branches in reference to the arrangement concerned. What the

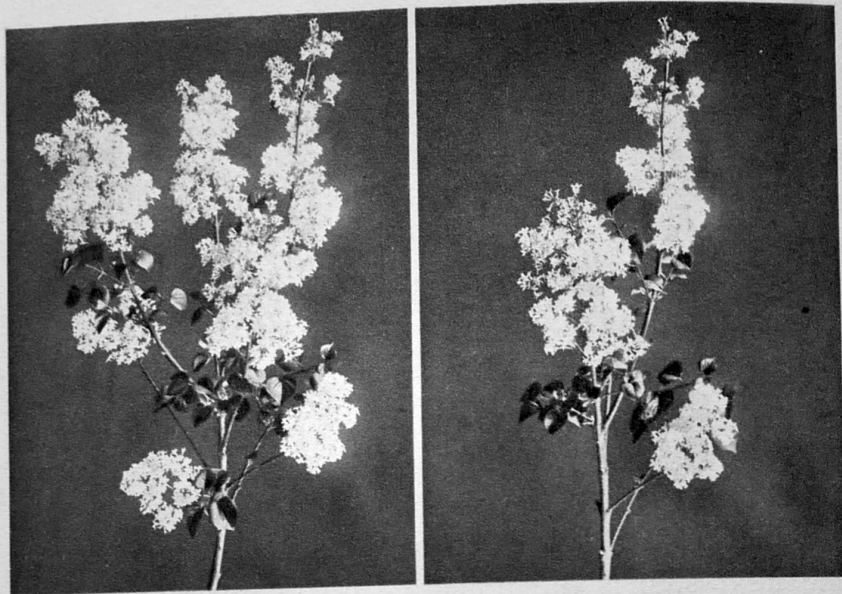
interesting points of flowers are, what feeling a branch of a tree may convey to the onlooker, what branches are important, or unimportant—these perhaps require years of experience in the art before satisfactory answers can be given. And then, it may sometimes appear that what determines the choice of flowers after all is not one's experience but insight. At any rate, a great deal of experience is indispensable for the selection of the proper flowers for arrangement.

Pruning of Flowers and Branches

When the flowers or branches have been chosen, the next step is the pruning. For there are no flowers or branches under the sun, however shapely or orderly they may have grown, which are without some superfluous parts. They all therefore need some pruning. Just what flower or branch should be cut off depends upon one's knowledge of nature and one's experience in the art of arrangement. The greater part of the pruning should be done before the arrangement is completed, the rest being performed while assembling the branches or after they have been assembled.

The Security of Flowers in Arrangement

Flowers or branches should be arranged so that they will have, first of all, security or equilibrium, i. e. they should be firmly fixed in the vase. This fixity or security depends upon the curve at the "foot" of each flower or branch,—the part of a branch or flower-



Shin, the centre service branch before pruning (A) and after pruning (B)

stem dipped in the water is so called,—or whether or not the entire weight of a branch or flower falls upon the stem at its point of contact with the water. To obtain the security or equilibrium of a branch, a curve should be made at the “foot” by twisting it. Some trees can easily be twisted, while others cannot, as there are differences in brittleness among them. The bending or twisting of a branch should be done very slowly and carefully, using both hands, otherwise it may break.

The Order of Arrangement

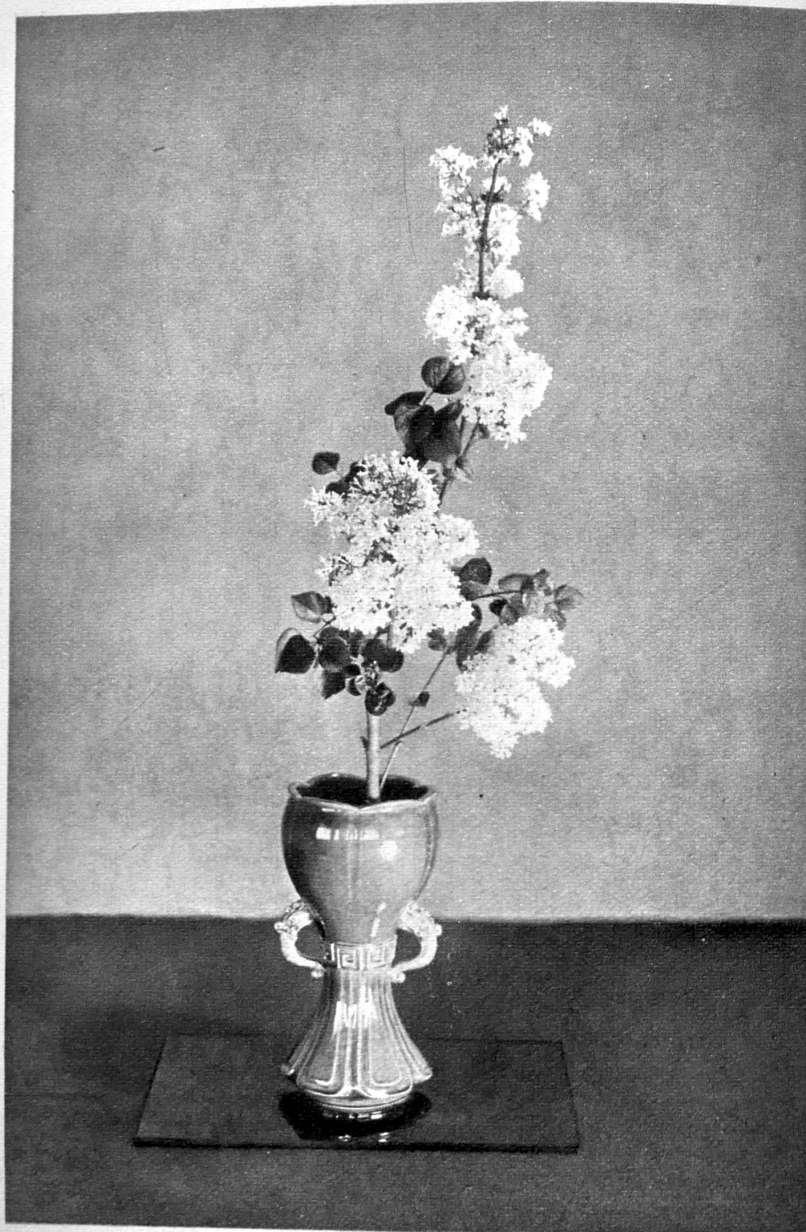
When the curve at the “foot,” or the right twist of each branch at the water’s edge, is made, and the length of each branch is determined, the pruning is done, and the angle at which the flower is to be set in the vase is decided. It is then time to put the

centre branch into the vase. After the centre branch comes the “bounder,” and finally the “stopping” branch. This is the regular order of arrangement, but sometimes the order is reversed so that the “bounder” is put first, then the centre, and lastly the “stopping” branch. Additional branches may be inserted between the main service branches after all the service branches have been arranged.

The Points of a Branch

For the purpose of flower arrangement each branch is regarded as having three points, namely, *edasaki*, the top, *futokoro*, the waist, and *mizugiwa*, the water’s edge. Each point may have a different form. The top may approach a point, or be spreading; it may have no flowers, or be laden with many flowers. Likewise the main service branches may each have three points, which will add variety and complexity to their arrangement. Thus, the centre branch may point upward, the “bounder” outward, while the “stopping” branch is thick with flowers. Take lilies, for example. They will make an interesting group if there are buds on the centre branch, full-blown flowers on the “bounder,” and half-open ones on the “stopping” branch.

The three points mentioned above may equally be applied to the entire figure of an arrangement. Generally, the top part of an arrangement should have few branches and only scattered flowers, the waist or the middle part a predominance of flowers, and the water’s edge or the lower part should be thick with leaves.



Shin, the centre service branch in arrangement



The centre branch with the "boulder"



The stopping branch added to the other service branches

If the middle part should be sparse and spreading, the top luxuriant with flowers or leaves, and the water's edge thin, there is no depth in the art.

Hachi-ike or the Water-Vase Arrangement

Arrangement in a water-vase is called *hachi-ike*. There are two kinds of this form of arrangement, namely, *kishi-ike*, the "land-arrangement," and *mizu-ike*, the "water-arrangement." In *kishi-ike*, a metal tripod holder is put upon the edge of the vase, and flowers are arranged in this holder. This is to represent flowers growing close by a pond. In *mizu-ike*, flowers are supposed to grow out of the water, so that a holder is put in the water of the vase. The commonest flowers for this style of arrangement are the iris laevigata (*kakitsubata*), the lotus, the water lily, and the candock. The position of the holder may be in the middle of the vase, towards a corner, or in two places.

The Beauty of Flowers, Leaves, and Branches

The beauty of a flower may be in the flower itself, or in the branches, or in the leaves, or in all three together. Thus, for instance, the tree-peony, the (herbaceous) peony, and the lily attract the eye with their flowers, while it is the branches rather than the flowers of the cherry and plum trees which charm. Therefore, if one arranges these trees, with regard to the branches, the blossoms will naturally become animated. Such flowers as the iris ensata (*hanashōbu*), the lotus, the

gibōshu (*hosta coerulea*), the iris *laevigata* (*kakitsubata*), and the daffodil attract us with their lovely leaves rather than with their flowers. And if in arranging them attention is paid to their leaves, the beauty of the flowers themselves will be enhanced. Because of this fact a special study has been made of their arrangement since olden days. The arrangement of these flowers has been called *hagumi*, or the "leaf-arrangement."

If the beauty of a flower lies chiefly in the flower itself, importance must be given to the flower. And if it is in the branches, the branches should be made the object of arrangement. But if the real charm is to be found in the leaves, the attention should be centred on the leaves themselves.

If any one is ignorant of the character of different flowers, and should centre his attention on the branches when the leaves should be given the greater importance, or should approach the arrangement from the standpoint of the flowers when he should be considering the branches, his efforts will end in failure. For they are quite beside the mark. Those who arrange flowers are like those who employ men. In order to make full use of the employees the employer should know their strong points as well as their weaknesses. So with those who manipulate flowers—they, too, must be aware of the strength as well as weakness of each flower in order to succeed in properly manipulating these delicate creations of nature.



Giving lessons in floral art

PROCEDURE IN FLOWER ARRANGEMENT

- I. ARRANGEMENT IN A VASE FOR
TOKONOMA
- II. ARRANGEMENT IN A HANGING VASE
- III. ARRANGEMENT IN A WATER VASE



Showing the position of the picture scroll, the flower vase, and the flower tray



Selection of flowers or branches



Beginning of flower arrangement



Some branches being added



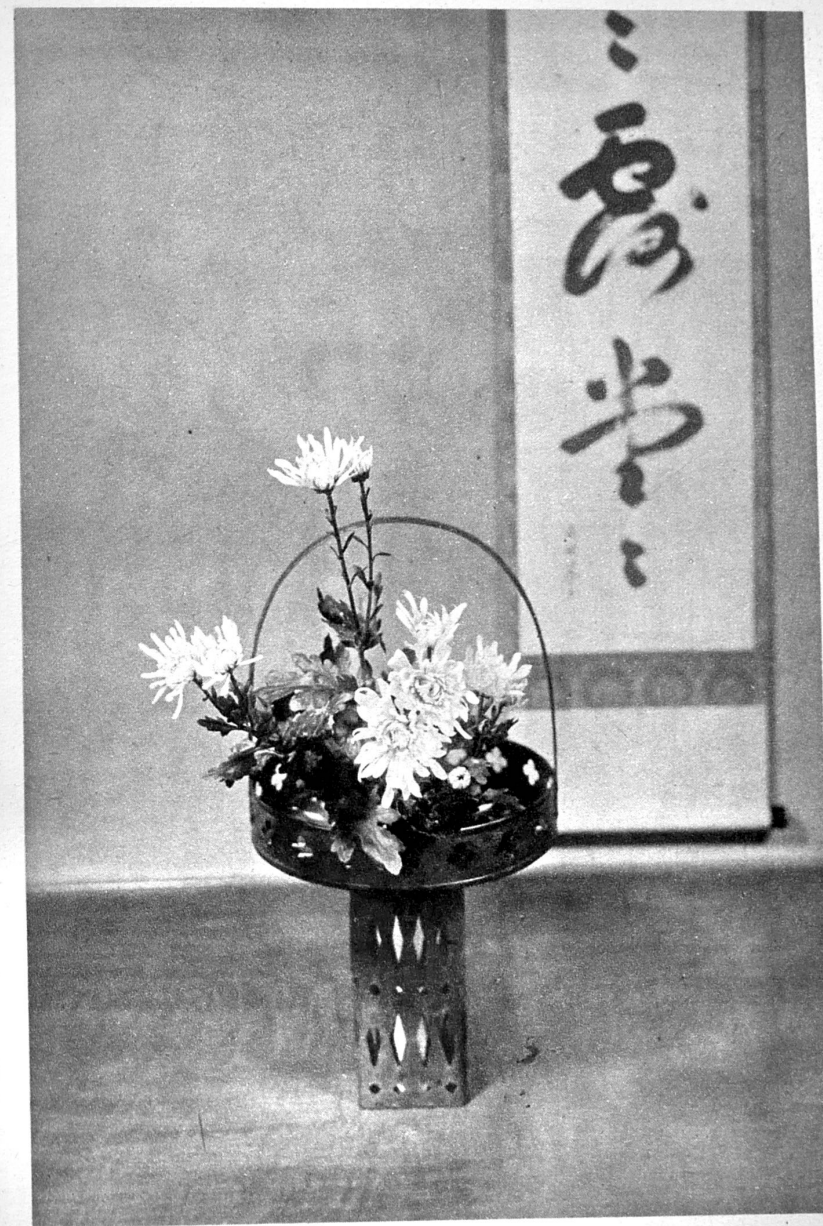
More branches being added



Pruning of branches or flowers



Cleaning when the arrangement is completed



Showing the completion of the arrangement
Picture scroll—a priest's calligraphy. Vase—of iron with
water-mark and handle. Flower—white chrysanthemum



Assembling of branches, when sitting



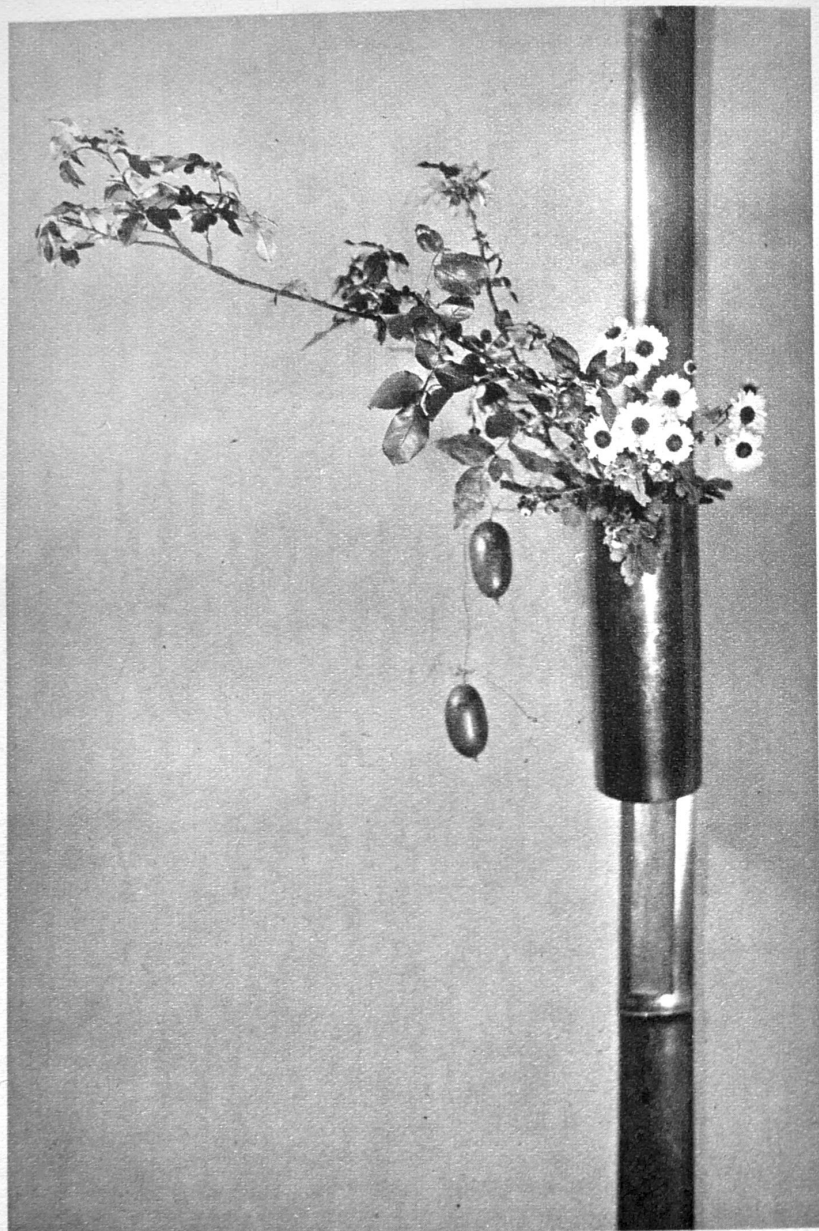
Arranging flowers in a vase, when standing



The top flowers having been arranged, the lower flowers are to be arranged



Water to be poured in, when the arrangement is finished



Completed arrangement
Vase—a bronze tube
Flowers—the snake-gourd and daisy



Bringing in a flower tray
Water vase and stone
Two flower-holders



Beginning of flower arrangement



Completed arrangement

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